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THE MIND OF THE *SPECTATOR* UNDER THE EDITORSHIP OF ADDISON AND STEELE

THE MIND OF THE *SPECTATOR* UNDER THE EDITORSHIP OF ADDISON & STEELE

By the Rev. Canon G. S. STREATFEILD

WITH A FOREWORD by the Right Rev. A. A. DAVID, D.D., *Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich*

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FOREWORD

It is restful and wholesome for us of this hurrying age occasionally to contemplate a quieter world. And there is no pleasanter way of doing so than through the eyes of the *Spectator*. Those were the days when even journalism was leisurely. It was Addison's earnest ambition to teach as well as to divert, to clear away encumbering hatreds and follies, and to build up public opinion on foundations of sober judgment and clear sense of right and wrong. There are some whose eagerness in this perennial task makes them didactic, pompous, impatient. But Addison is among those who can wait. He would rather wear down than tear down ignorance, passion and prejudice. He will take time to look well into men's minds before he takes side against them. He trusts men to see their own faces in the honest mirror he holds up to them, and he would rather set them laughing at themselves than condemning each other. So he gives them these "homœopathic doses of good sense, good taste and good-humoured morality." And when,

from time to time, he spoke out in reproof, men listened because they felt that he had understood.

This book was compiled by one whose own warmth of heart, and native taste, and humorous temper are reflected in the *Mind of the Spectator*, which he understood the better because he was in natural accord with the broad human sympathy there revealed. It has been prepared for publication as a labour of love in which I am glad to be allowed even in a very small degree to join.

A. A. DAVID,
BISHOP OF ST. EDMUNDSBURY
AND IPSWICH.

December, 1922.

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THE MIND OF THE *SPECTATOR* UNDER THE EDITORSHIP OF ADDISON AND STEELE

CHAPTER I

PERSONAL

"ADDISON is the *Spectator*." So writes Lord Macaulay in his brilliant essay on that prince of letters; so he records his conviction that what proceeded from his pen was so incomparably superior to the rest, that lesser lights, not excluding Richard Steele himself, were completely eclipsed.

Without for a moment disputing the unrivalled pre-eminence of Addison, it is, perhaps, not presumptuous to suggest that Macaulay, in his almost unrestrained admiration for the subject of his essay, did scant justice to the literary merit of Steele, who contributed many notable papers to the first seven volumes of the *Spectator*.[1]

[1] For a very high appreciation of Steele see Justin McCarthy's *Four Georges*. Steele was "more natural, more simple, more

To what proportion of the reading public of to-day are Joseph Addison and Richard Steele more than names? Who reads the *Spectator* in this twentieth century? In the days of our grandfathers no library, or even collection of books, was without its copy of the *Spectator*, and educated men would have been ashamed to confess that they were unacquainted with its pages. Nowadays, except where eighteenth and early nineteenth century libraries remain intact, the work is seldom met with. Nor, indeed, can this be wondered at. So absorbing and varied in interest is contemporary literature that we can hardly be surprised if books that delighted our forbears have fallen into neglect. Further, when the *Spectator* does happen to come our way, and we find ourselves confronted with eight volumes, we are apt to turn regretfully away with the

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fresh than Addison" (vol. i., p. 394). Courthope claims a greater power of initiation for Steele as compared with Addison, and goes so far as to say, "Whatever was perfected by Addison was begun by Steele" (*Life of Addison*, p. 104). So Austin Dobson in his introduction to the *Spectator:* "If it can be proved that we owe the *Spectator* to the *Tatler*, it is equally demonstrable that we owe Addison to Steele" (p. xix). The depreciation of Steele in comparison of Addison by the reading public and literary critic "culminated in Macaulay's brilliant Edinburgh article of 1843 on Miss Aikin's *Addison*. Here Steele is systematically depressed to exalt his friend" (p. xxvii).

thought "Life is too short." Moreover, the most appreciative of readers is bound to admit that whatever may have been thought in the reign of Queen Anne, a very considerable portion of the *Spectator* can hardly be read to-day either with interest or profit. Has not Lord Morley said, "Even of Goethe himself many a page has grown unreadable"?

Chief, then, among those who wrote for the *Spectator*, chief both in quantity and quality of writing, was Addison; Steele came a very good second in both these respects. Before reading what they provided for the instruction and amusement of the public, it may be well to try and see who, and what manner of men, they were. Without attempting even a sketch of their life, it will add to the interest of the following pages if the main facts of their career are very briefly given.[1]

Joseph, the son of Lancelot Addison, Dean

[1] Those who would trace the history of Joseph Addison from the cradle to the grave may be referred to the following sources of information: *The Life of Addison*, by Lucy Aikin; *The Essay on Addison*, by Lord Macaulay (a somewhat severe criticism of Aikin); *The Life of Addison*, by W. J. Courthope, and his life in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. The best authority for the life of Richard Steele is his life in two vols. by George A. Aitken. The notice in the *Dictionary of National Biography* by Austin Dobson is also excellent.

of Lichfield, was born in 1672, and was educated at Charterhouse and at Magdalen College, Oxford, of which foundation he was a Scholar, and subsequently, from 1698 to 1711, a Fellow. After some years' residence he left the University with a very high reputation for classical scholarship. He entered the political world as a moderate Whig, under the patronage of Lord Halifax, who believed, and rightly believed, that his literary gifts would prove useful to the party. In 1699 and 1700 Addison resided for a year and a half in France, and then visited Italy, Germany, and Holland.[1] In 1704 he was appointed Commissioner of Appeal in Excise, and in 1706 an Under-Secretaryship of State was conferred upon him. In the following year he attended Lord Halifax in the capacity of secretary on his mission to the Elector of Hanover.

In 1708 he entered Parliament as Member for Lostwithiel; later he was returned for Malmesbury, which he represented from 1710 to the end of his life. He took little or no part in parliamentary debates; indeed, there is a well substantiated tradition that, on the only occasion on which

[1] According to *Addisoniana*, on his return from the Continent Addison, on account of straitened means, was for a time tutor to a travelling squire. I have not found this confirmed in other records of his life, but Macaulay makes allusion to it.

he rose to address the House, after a few almost inarticulate words, he sat down in confusion.[1] In 1709 he became secretary to Lord Wharton, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, but in the following year, when the Whigs went out of office, he returned to privacy and leisure. The Tory administration lasted until the death of Queen Anne; and it was in this period of his life that Addison's most brilliant and best-known literary work was produced, first in papers contributed to the *Tatler*, subsequently to the *Spectator*. Previously to the loss of his Government appointment he had written for Steele's venture of the *Tatler*,[2]

[1] In connection with this experience the following passage from *Addisoniana* has some interest: "Mr. Addison told his Lordship (Lord Halifax) that he did not aim at so high a post (that of Secretary of State), and desired him to remember that he was not a speaker in the House of Commons. Lord Halifax briskly replied, 'Come, prythee, Addison, no unreasonable modesty. I made thee Secretary to the Regency with this very view. Thou hast now the best right of any man in England to be Secretary of State; nay, it will be a sort of displacing thee not to make thee so. If thou couldst but get over that silly sheepishness of thine that makes thee sit in the House and hear a fellow prate for half an hour together, who has not a tenth part of thy good sense, I should be glad to see it so'" (vol. i., p. 108).

[2] Steele was fully aware of the debt that he owed to Addison for his contributions to the *Tatler*, and very handsomely acknowledged it, admitting that Addison had assisted him "with such force of genius, humour, wit, and learning that I fared like a

and when, in December, 1710, the *Tatler* was abandoned, to be followed within three months by the *Spectator*, Addison, though Steele figured as editor-in-chief, took from the first a predominant part in the new enterprise; and it is needless to add that the *Spectator* has come down to us far more closely identified with the name of Addison than with that of Steele. Addison's connection with the *Spectator* ended in December, 1714. In the years that followed his pen was chiefly employed in the Whig interest, and in support of the Hanoverian dynasty; and there is no doubt that his numerous contributions to the *Guardian*, and subsequently to the *Freeholder*, did good service for his political friends. He was appointed Secretary of State in 1717 under the premiership of Sunderland, but resigned his office in the following year.

Meanwhile, in his forty-third year, he was united in marriage to the Dowager Countess of Warwick; but, if we may trust a consistent tradition, the union did not add to his happiness. One daughter, Charlotte, was the issue of the marriage. The accounts that have come down

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distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary; when I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him" (Preface to octavo edition of the *Tatler*, 1711).

to us of this daughter are somewhat conflicting, but one gathers the impression that, to say the least, she did not inherit her father's intellectual gifts.[1]

In 1711 Addison bought an estate at Bilton, near Rugby,[2] and that he resided there at times is proved by the fact that some of his letters were dispatched from thence. There Charlotte Addison, who was but a year old at her father's death in 1719, died unmarried in 1797.

We pass from the circumstances of Addison's career to what is more important for our present purpose—namely, his character and temperament, his literary work and aims in life.

[1] See March and May numbers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1797.

[2] An engraving of Addison's house at Bilton forms the frontispiece to the second volume of *Addisoniana*. The house is still standing, and is known as Bilton Hall. In the grounds there formerly stood an avenue of Spanish chestnuts, known as Addison's Walk, which naturally connects itself in our mind with Addison's Walk in Magdalen College Meadow, Oxford. The chestnuts have disappeared, but there is still a walk that goes by the name of Addison's Walk. In the garden attached to the house stands a summer-house known as Addison's Summer-house. Miss Addison was buried at Bilton, and there is a small monument to her memory in the parish church. Addison himself was buried in Westminster Abbey. The body, after lying in state, was interred in Poets' Corner. Addison died at Holland House, the property of the Countess of Warwick.

Addison's outlook on life was that of the philosopher. He cherished no enthusiasms to carry him away, he had no fads to indulge, no hobbies to ride, no prejudices to pervert his judgment, no axes of his own to grind. By nature the very soul of impartiality, he could look at subjects patiently and sympathetically from other points of view than his own. His mission was to observe and criticise; he was the "Spectator," looking on dispassionately, at the same time critically—a looker-on with a mind of his own, a mind made up as to what was right and what was wrong, wise or foolish, refined or vulgar.[1]

Much of his work was concerned with the fashionable world as it then existed. It was one main object of the *Spectator* to hold up a mirror

[1] In the following sentences from No. 1 Addison sketches his character and office: "Thus I live in the world rather as a spectator of mankind than as one of the species, by which means I have made myself a speculative statesman, soldier, merchant, and artisan, without ever meddling with any practical part in life. I am very well versed in the theory of a husband or a father, and can discern the errors in the economy, business, and diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them, as standers-by discover blots which are apt to escape those who are in the game. I never espoused any party with violence, and am resolved to observe an exact neutrality between the Whigs and the Tories. . . . In short, I have acted in all parts of my life as a looker-on, which is the character I intend to preserve in this paper."

in which society might see the unvarnished truth about itself. The picture he drew set the world a-laughing, and has helped to keep the world merry ever since he wrote. Moreover, the picture was one that set the world a-laughing at itself. His own amusement at what he observes is expressed with such humour and *bonhomie* that the victim of his wit is constrained to share the mirth that is raised at his own expense.[1]

No greater mistake, however, could be made than to suppose that Addison aimed no higher than the reformation of manners and fashions. His purpose in life was a very serious one. He made it his business to instruct, enlighten,

[1] This was well expressed by Tickell in the following lines, part of a poem appended to No. 532 of the *Spectator*:

> "Thy glass betrays what treacherous love would hide;
> Nor harsh thy precepts; but, infused by stealth,
> Please while they cure, and cheat us into health.
> Thy works in Chloe's toilet gain a part,
> And with the tailor share the fopling's heart;
> Lash'd in thy satire, the penurious cit
> Laughs at himself and finds no harm in wit."

The poem was dedicated to the supposed author of the *Spectator*. Addison wrote anonymously, but his authorship was more or less an open secret. This poem contains a noble tribute to the high moral tone of Addison's writings. In the fifth stanza he is designated "the British Virgil."

correct;[1] he was a great ethical teacher, and it needs but slight acquaintance with his works to know that his moral instruction was based on his religious belief as a sincere Christian. As a teacher of ethics he deserved the gratitude of every right-thinking person in his own time; and we, as we read what he said to his contemporaries, may share their gratitude. "Of the services his essays rendered to society it is difficult to speak too highly."[2]

The particular weapon with which he attacked the objects of his disapproval (and they were many) was irony, but irony as unlike that of his great contemporary Dean Swift as it is possible to conceive. There was nothing bitter, savage, or gloomy in Addison's attack; he did not lash vice or hoot at folly, and the result was that the world listened to him, while it turned a deaf ear to the

[1] "Most of the papers I give the public are written on subjects that never vary, but are for ever fixed and immutable. Of this kind are all my more serious essays and discourses; but there is another sort of speculations, which I consider as occasional papers, that take their rise from the folly, extravagance, and caprice of the present age. For I look upon myself as one set to watch the manners and behaviour of my countrymen and contemporaries, and to mark down every absurd fashion, ridiculous custom, or affected form of speech that makes its appearance in the world during the course of these my speculations" (No. 435 by Addison).

[2] Macaulay's *Essay on Addison.*

Dean. The relations of the two men were very friendly, especially during Addison's official visits to Ireland.[1] So close was the bond between them that in 1705 Addison dedicated his *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* to Swift, "the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of his age." At the same time the two men were a notable contrast to one another, whether from a literary, political, or temperamental point of view. This contrast in respect of character was striking; indeed, whereas Swift was the pessimist of his time, it would be difficult to name a more conspicuous representative of optimism than Addison. The specimen of his writing best known to the general public affords a happy illustration of this outstanding feature of his character. As we sing in all our churches the beautiful and familiar hymn, "When all Thy mercies, O my God,"[2] we do not need to be told that the writer was a man who lived at peace with God and his neighbour, or that, even if he did not go the whole length with a great contemporary in believing that he lived in the best possible of worlds, he was nevertheless well content with life as he found it, and thankful for many unde-

[1] Addison resided in Ireland for some time in 1709 and 1715 as Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant.

[2] This hymn is appended to No. 453 of the *Spectator*.

served blessings. His essays in the *Spectator* yield abundant proof of the cheerfulness of soul with which he looked out upon the world, a world of which he formed a more important factor than he himself was aware.

Much of Addison's life was passed with a select circle of friends and companions in the coffee-houses so popular in his time. His favourite haunt was Button's. There he met his friends, drank and smoked with them (for he enjoyed his pipe as he did his glass), and reigned supreme. Macaulay indeed notes, as one of his foibles, a fondness for attaching to himself men of talents far inferior to his own, who installed him as dictator and were content to sit at his feet.[1] The life that he led for many years under these conditions was not such as to conduce to health, and may well have tended

[1] It is surprising that Macaulay does not support this criticism of his hero's character by an appeal to Pope's lines on Atticus (Addison) in his prologue to the satires. The malignity of the caricature is accentuated by the fact that the satires were written and published many years after Addison's death. Of these lines Andrew Lang says: "Nothing that inspired skill and spite can do is better than this satire; had Addison been alive when it was given to the world, he could not have hit a return blow, for cruelty was not in his nature, and Pope was so sensitive that any retort on him was cruel" (*History of English Literature*, p. 406). On Pope's quarrel with Addison see Courthope, *op. cit.*, p. 131 *ff.*

to hasten his premature death at the age of forty-seven.[1]

Exercise did not apparently form an important element in his system of life, in spite of the advice he gave to others. That he was averse to violent exercise may be gathered from the account he gives of himself when out with the hounds while on a visit to Sir Roger de Coverley. "My aversion to leaping hedges made me withdraw to rising ground, from whence I could have the pleasure of the whole chase without the fatigue of keeping with the hounds."[2] It may be surmised that his somewhat corpulent person found that "leaping hedges" was not the most suitable form of exercise.

[1] Addison's chosen haunt was Button's Coffee-house in Covent Garden, so named from its proprietor, Daniel Button, at one time in the service of the Countess of Warwick, whom Addison married in 1716. Addison and Steele deserted Will's Coffee-house, which held the premier place in Dryden's time, and helped Button to start one. Will's was still a haunt of the learned in the time of the *Spectator*, but its reputation was greatly lowered since Dryden's death by gambling associations. See Shelley's *Inns and Taverns of Old London*. According to Pope, Addison "usually studied all the morning, then met his comrades at Button's, dined there, and stayed five or six hours, sometimes far into the night." Pope himself had belonged to the company, but withdrew from it after about a year, alleging as his reason for withdrawal that such a life was injuring his health. Phillips, in *Addisoniana*, gives a similar account of Addison's habits.

[2] *Spectator*, No. 116.

Almost faultless as Addison's style of composition has always been esteemed, there is ample contemporary evidence that his conversational powers were fully equal to those of his pen. In a mixed assembly, indeed, he was reticent, and thus earned the character he gave of himself as "the silent member of society";[1] but at his club with a few and congenial companions, his flow of conversation was as remarkable for eloquence as for good sense,[2] most brilliant of all when his audience consisted of one;[3] yet such was his natural diffidence and reserve that, as has already been noted, his only attempt to speak in Parliament was a humiliating failure. It is possible that he was contrasting his power to reach the public with his pen with failure to influence the world by his tongue when he replied to a lady who accused him of being dull in conversation, "Madam, I have only nine pence in my pocket,

[1] There are frequent references in the *Spectator* to this habit of silence.

[2] According to Pope, "Addison was perfect good company with intimates, and had something more charming in his conversation than I ever knew in any other man" (Spence's *Anecdotes*, p. 150).

[3] Swift declared that "often as they spent their evenings together they never wished for a third person" (*Dictionary of National Biography*). Addison himself was wont to say that there was no such thing as real conversation but between two persons" (Aikin, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 180).

but I can draw for a thousand pounds."[1] His love and habit of silence are amusingly treated in No. 115 of the *Spectator*, in which he dwells with satisfaction on the advantages of dumb-bell exercise, which "pleases him the more because it does everything that is required of it in the most profound silence."[2]

The only flaw in Addison's character, if we should consider the charge substantiated, may have been connected with this failing of self-distrust. The great majority of writers have accepted the tradition that he was not so sober a man as we could wish to think him. If such was indeed the case, it may well have been that, finding his thought stimulated and his tongue loosed by wine, the temptation to indulgence was great; and we actually read of Steele "having the duty imposed upon him of drinking his friend Addison up to conversation pitch."[3] Steele, it may be remarked,

[1] *Addisoniana*, vol. i., p. 3.

[2] Dumb-bell, formerly an apparatus like that for swinging a church bell, but without the bell itself, thus making no noise, while it involved bodily exercise. The word was also applied to a similar apparatus used in learning the art of bell-ringing. See the *Oxford Dictionary*.

[3] In his essay in *Defence of Sober Drinking* (*Tatler*, No. 252), Steele himself published a letter purporting to be from Ralph and Bridget Yokefellow, in which Addison is brought forward as an illustration of the fact that a certain amount of wine "brightens the intellect, stimulates the imagination, and loosens the tongue."

was, from this point of view, not a desirable companion for Addison, since his memory is much more deeply stained in this respect than that of his friend. If tradition is right,[1] and Addison must plead guilty to this infirmity, it must not be forgotten that moral standards change, and that, in this particular, what would to-day disqualify a man for appearing in society, carried no disgrace with it in the reign of Queen Anne.[2]

The story of Richard Steele's life must now be briefly told. The same year (1672) saw the birth both of Addison and Steele. They were contem-

[1] Miss Aikin defends Addison's memory against this charge, and Mr. Courthope is far from accepting the truth of the tradition. According to Mr. Courthope, the charge of inebriety appears to be traced to the unfriendly hand of Pope (*op. cit.*, p. 159). On its being remarked that Addison wrote some of his best papers in the *Spectator* when "warm with wine," Dr. Johnson expressed his unwillingness to believe it. See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iv., p. 90. It may be fairly urged against the truth of this tradition that the vice of intemperance is very forcibly dealt with in the pages of the *Spectator*. See especially No. 569, which is nothing less than a very impressive temperance lecture. See below on the moral condition of society in the days of the *Spectator*.

[2] "It may be questioned whether there is a single wit of the age who did not love port too well, like Addison and Fenton" (Dennis, *The Age of Pope*, p. 17). Dr. Johnson remembered the time when "all the decent people of Lichfield got drunk every night and not thought the worse of" (Lecky, *Eighteenth Century*).

poraries at Charterhouse, and here their lifelong friendship began. Steele followed his friend to Oxford, but left the University in 1694 without taking his degree. On leaving Oxford Steele entered the army. The most interesting event in this period of his life is the duel that he fought in 1700 with a Captain Kelly, an event which produced a permanent impression upon his character and found prominent expression in his writings. In this encounter Captain Kelly was dangerously, but not mortally, wounded. Steele's remorse in connection with this incident was acute, and made him a determined opponent of the practice of duelling, then so much in vogue. In 1701 Steele wrote and published *The Christian Hero* "as a standing testimony against himself," and to prove that "no principles but those of religion are sufficient to make a great man." The appearance of this book did not increase his popularity with the military society in which his lot was cast. This literary effort was followed in the same year by a comedy, *The Funeral, or Grief à la Mode*. In 1703 he produced his second comedy, *The Lying Lover*, which was followed by *The Tender Husband*. This for several years closed his career as a playwright.

Very soon after the production of his first comedy Steele married a widow, Mrs. Margaret

Stretch, but in 1706 was left a widower. In 1707, however, he married again, his second wife being Mary Scurlock, heiress of Jonathan Scurlock, a man of some property in Carmarthenshire. Husband and wife were devoted to one another; but married life was not without its trials, he being erratic, improvident, and given to drink, she, on her part, being exacting and imperious.

In April, 1709, Steele brought out the first number of the *Tatler*, this name being given to the periodical "in honour of the fair sex." Addison's first contribution to the publication (No. 18)[1] was followed by many others. In his preface to the fourth and final volume Steele paid a glowing and self-depreciatory tribute to the assistance he had received from his friend.[2] The *Tatler* ended its career in December, 1710, and in the following March the *Spectator* was started. Out of the five hundred and fifty-five numbers published under their joint editorship, two hundred and seventy-four were written by Addison, two hundred and thirty-six by Steele.[3]

[1] The authorship of this paper is not absolutely certain, but the internal evidence could hardly be stronger than it is.

[2] Out of two hundred and seventy-one numbers, forty-two are Addison's, one hundred and eighty-eight Steele's.

[3] Steele's papers are signed with the letters T. and R., though, according to Arnold, some of the papers signed T., without any clue as to which, were by Tickell. Addison's essays are

With the publication of the five hundred and fifty-fifth number Steele's connection with the *Spectator* ended. No ostensible reason was given for the discontinuance of this important and, from both a literary and social point of view, epoch-making venture. It is not unlikely that the mental strain required for the production of these essays may have been responsible for what must have seemed an untimely end. After an interval of a year and a half, in June, 1714, Addison, without the co-operation of Steele, returned to the task, and continued it for half a year, during which time seventy-nine numbers were produced, which form the eighth and last volume of the *Spectator*, the concluding number appearing on December 20 of the same year.[1]

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signed with one of the four letters, C, L, I, O. The most probable explanation of this device, though ridiculed by Gregory Smith, is that the letter in each case stands for the place at which the paper was written—Chelsea, London, Islington, Office. Another possible clue is that the four letters spell the name of one of the Muses. The suggestion was Tickell's (see No. 555). It has further been observed that, by transposing the letters, Clio becomes loci, but this can hardly have been more than a coincidence. There is an allusion to these various modes of signature in No. 221, but obviously so framed as to throw dust in the reader's eyes.

[1] Mr. Henry Morley, in his introduction to the *Spectator*, speaks of this eighth volume as an unsuccessful attempt to revive the periodical, but adduces no evidence for the support

A portion of the *Tatler* had been set apart for the news of the day. This was Steele's plan, and doubtless it promoted the success of his undertaking. One of Addison's essays in the *Spectator* (No. 452) opens with an expression of astonishment at the Englishman's craving for news; and, on that ground, nothing could be more natural and reasonable than to make the *Tatler* a medium for satisfying the want. When, however, the *Spectator* appeared with Addison as chief contributor, this feature was not revived;

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of his view. Miss Aikin (vol. ii., p. 141) says that the eighth volume consists partly of hitherto unused material, but gives no authority for her statement. It is certain, as Lord Macaulay points out, that this volume contains some of Addison's best work. His authorship of many of the papers is guaranteed by the poet Tickell, Addison's literary executor. Macaulay speaks as if the volume came substantially from his pen; and certainly some of the papers not guaranteed by Tickell bear the strongest internal evidence of Addison's handiwork. A promise contained in No. 633 that the name of the writer should be attached to each essay was not fulfilled. According to Nathan Drake, a ninth volume was started without any countenance or help from the original editors of the *Spectator*. The matter was very inferior, and only lingered to the sixty-first number. Meanwhile, between May 28 and September 22, 1713, Addison contributed fifty-five papers to Steele's venture of the *Guardian*, many of them eminently worthy of his pen. Steele pursued his vocation as an essayist in many productions after the *Spectator*—namely, the *Guardian*, the *Englishman*, the *Lover*, the *Reader*, *Town Talk*, the *Tea-Table*, *Chitchat*, the *Theatre*.

and it is not unfair to draw the conclusion that it was his genius that raised the circulation of the *Spectator*, without this expedient, far beyond that of its predecessor.[1]

Before concluding this chapter, something must be said of the literary gifts which enabled Addison and Steele to enrich the world by the publication of the *Spectator*.

Long before Addison wrote for the *Tatler* he had shown his eminence as a classical scholar. He was unquestionably one of the best Latinists of his day. His versification in that language was the admiration of his contemporaries. His acquaintance with Greek language and literature was not equal to his knowledge of Latin, but, speaking generally, as a classical scholar he had few equals in his own day.[2] His absorbing love for

[1] By a somewhat rough-and-ready calculation Spectator in No. 10, counting twenty readers to every copy sold, estimates his readers as some sixty thousand in London and Westminster. It has been asserted that the circulation of the *Spectator* eventually reached fourteen thousand. See Lecky, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 38. Various calculations and statements have been made in respect of the circulation, but much discrepancy in the data makes it impossible to arrive at any certainty upon this point.

[2] Before he was thirty Addison had published much Latin verse, both original and translations, which had procured him a high reputation for scholarship. Mr. Courthope's estimate of his attainments in Greek scholarship differs considerably from that of Lord Macaulay, who is depreciatory. It is probable

the ancient classics, which finds expression in many numbers of the *Spectator*, may account for his contempt for Gothic, as compared with classical, architecture.[1]

Addison's contributions to the *Tatler* were far from being his first literary productions in his own language. Both in English prose and verse he had been many years a practised hand before he joined Steele in his editorial work. Notably he had written and published his well-known *Remarks upon Italy* in 1705. But, as it has been well said, "in his contributions to the *Tatler*

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that Courthope is the more correct of the two (*op. cit.*, p. 28). Dr. Nathan Drake, a well-informed critic, remarks that Addison's earliest compositions, whether in Latin or English, contain no traces of the humour and imagination that characterise his later compositions (*Essays on Tatler, Guardian*, etc., vol. i., p. 301).

[1] As Addison contemplated the glories of the cathedral at Sienna, he could not but regret that the prodigious quantity of stone employed in "these barbarous buildings" had not been put to better use in the erection of vast structures in the classical style. See *Remarks upon Italy;* Addison's works, edited by Bishop Hurd, 1811, vol. ii., p. 149. Milan Cathedral is described as "a vast Gothic pile of buildings," but with no note of admiration (*ibid.*, p. 11). Many slighting allusions to Gothic architecture disfigure the pages of the *Spectator* as well as other writings of Addison. He went, however, so far as to admit, while lost in admiration of St. Peter's at Rome, that the *cruciform* Gothic church was best adapted for Christian worship (*Addisoniana*, vol. ii., p. 241).

his calling was found, and the most delightful talker in the world began to speak."[1]

The talent that had adorned the *Tatler* was turned to still better account in the *Spectator*. Steele's work, from almost every point of view, was inferior to that of his friend, but much of it is very good, and no one can read the *Spectator* without admiring the versatility and resourcefulness of the principal contributors. To have produced so many gems with such rapidity and in so short a space of time was an astonishing effort of literary genius.

As a stylist Addison certainly led the way in the literature of his own country. "Addison may be said to have almost created, and wholly perfected, English prose as an instrument for the expression of social thought."[2] Addison, wrote Dr. Johnson, "is the Raphael of essay-writers."[3] "Nothing," said Voltaire, "can equal the sweetness of Addison's prose."[4] Whilst the vicissitudes of literary reputation are proverbial, and many an idol of contemporary opinion has been broken by the judgment of those who come

[1] Thackeray's *English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*, 103.

[2] Courthope, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

[3] *Johnsonian Miscellanies*, vol. i., p. 467.

[4] *Addisoniana*, vol. i., p. 39.

later, Addison has defied the criticism of posterity, and his work is little less admired to-day than when it first appeared.[1]

The notices that have come down to us of Addison's methods of work are few, but, such as they are, are full of interest. We have the authority of Steele for saying that he was a writer of extraordinary readiness of expression. "Steele used to say that when Addison had taken his resolution or made his plan for what he designed to write, he would walk about a room and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease

[1] Dr. Johnson paid a very high tribute both to the moral worth and literary genius of Addison, when he gave the following advice to the shoemaker poet: "Give nights and days to the study of Addison if you mean to be a good writer, or, what is more worth, an honest man" (*Johnsonian Miscellanies*, vol. i., p. 233). *Cf.* the well-known conclusion of Johnson's essay on Addison in *The Lives of the Poets*.

Bishop Hurd, the eminent critic of the eighteenth century, whose edition of the *Spectator*, in six volumes, is still considered the best, deserted Addison for Shakespeare as his favourite author, but returned in later life to his first love. "Such useful sense, in so charming words, I find not elsewhere. His taste is so pure, and his *Virgilian prose* (as Dr. Young styles it) so exquisite, that I have but now found out, at the close of a critical life, the full value of his writings" (Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. vi., p. 510). This was written to a friend in 1770; the writer lived until 1808! Dr. Saintsbury is justly severe on Bishop Hurd for his preference of Addison to Shakespeare.

as anyone could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated."[1] Pope confirms this record of Steele as to the great fluency of his composition. Pope adds that he was "sometimes very slow and scrupulous in correcting."[2] So, too, Warton, in his essay on Pope, tells us that Addison was "so fastidious in composition that he would often stop the press to alter a preposition or conjunction."[3]

Richard Steele, the number of whose contributions to the first seven volumes of the *Spectator* fell little short of Addison's, was also gifted with remarkable facility in writing, and at his best was no unworthy collaborator with his more cultured and thoughtful friend. In comparing the work of the two men, one is bound to confess that a stricter censorship of Steele's numerous papers would have been desirable. On the other hand, when allowance is made for change in taste and sentiment, there are few passages from Addison's pen that offend our modern sense of propriety and refinement. If we compare his work with that of his only contemporary rival in English literature, Dean Swift, we may see the length to which, in the days of the *Spectator*,

[1] See *Addisoniana*, vol. i., p. 93.
[2] See Spence's *Anecdotes*, pp. 149, 155.
[3] Courthope, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

a writer could go in the direction of coarseness and indecency without forfeiting the patronage, and even respect, of the reading public. Macaulay may have overstepped the truth when he wrote: "Since Addison's time the open violation of decency has always been considered amongst us as a mark of a fool";[1] but Addison certainly led the way in convincing the world that true wit and humour are independent of pruriency.

[1] *Essay on Addison.* Dennis, in *The Age of Pope*, speaking of the time of the *Spectator*, says: "The standard even of the less morally offensive drama, what was termed 'genteel drama,' is conclusive testimony that the best society had little pretension to refinement, or even decency, in the stricter sense of the word" (p. 194). The following words of Thackeray are to the point: "We can't tell you; you would not bear to be told the whole truth regarding those men and those manners. You could no more suffer in a British drawing-room, under the reign of Queen Victoria, a fine gentleman or a fine lady of Queen Anne's time, or hear what they heard and said, than you would receive an ancient Briton" (*English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 117). Those who wish to verify this statement may be referred to the *Dialogues* in Swift's *Art of Polite Conversation.* On the coarseness of the early eighteenth century see Besant's *London in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 276.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN THE *SPECTATOR*

We append to the foregoing chapter some extracts from several numbers of the "Spectator," which may add to the interest of what follows, as illustrating the habits and career of the principal contributor, as throwing light on the aims and objects of his work and that of his staff, and as introducing to the reader the personal element, real or fictitious, that he will encounter in the pages of the "Spectator."

No. 1.—*In this opening essay, Spectator, in the person of Addison, is really introducing himself to his readers. The description that he gives must not be accepted as literally true or strictly biographical, but it corresponds in general features with the character, career, and habits of the writer. He portrays himself as from the first moments of his existence grave and silent.* My mother has often told me I threw away my rattle before I was two months old, and would not make use of my coral until they had taken away the bells from it. *When he went to school he gained the reputation*

of being a very sullen youth among his mates, but was a favourite with his master, "who used to say that my parts were solid, and would wear well." *At the University he was as distinguished for profound silence as for great studiousness and omnivorous reading, leaving Oxford* "with the character of an odd, unaccountable fellow that had a great deal of learning, if I would but show it." *His insatiable thirst for knowledge carried him to foreign lands.*[1] *On returning to England he settled in the City of London, becoming familiar with all the varieties of the life that was going on around him, haunting places of public resort, such as the theatres and the Royal Exchange, and enjoying to the full the experiences of fashionable coffee-houses, in which, while pretending to be buried in the "Postman,"*[2] *he was listening attentively to the conversation of the company. He warns his readers*

[1] He describes himself as having travelled as far as Grand Cairo for the purpose of measuring a pyramid. This journey was purely imaginary, and the statement is explained as being a satirical reference to the mathematician and orientalist, John Greaves, Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, who wrote on the pyramids (Pyramidographia). Grand Cairo is mentioned in several other numbers of the *Spectator*—namely, 8, 17, 46, 69, 101, 159, 604.

[2] The *Postman* was established and edited by M. Fonvire, a French Protestant, and was, perhaps, in higher repute than any other newspaper. The price was one penny until the passing of the Stamp Act.

that they will get no politics from his pen, and that in reading his paper they will simply become acquainted with the thought and experiences of a looker-on. "I have been often told by my friends that it is a pity so many useful discoveries which I have made should be in the possession of a silent man. For this reason, therefore, I shall publish a sheet full of thoughts every morning for the benefit of my contemporaries; and if I can any way contribute to the diversion or improvement of the country in which I live, I shall leave it, when I am summoned out of it, with the secret satisfaction of thinking that I have not lived in vain."

Midway in the career of the "Spectator"—namely, in No. 262—Addison writes thus: I think myself highly obliged to the public for their kind acceptance of a paper which visits them every morning, and has in it none of those seasonings that recommend so many of the writings that are in vogue among us.

As, on the one side, my paper has not in it a single word of news, a reflection in politics, nor a stroke of party, so, on the other, there are no fashionable touches of infidelity, no obscene ideas, no satires upon priesthood, marriage, and the like popular objects of ridicule, no private scandal, nor anything that may tend to the

depravation of particular persons, families, or societies.

There is not one of these above-mentioned subjects that would not sell a very indifferent paper, could I think of gratifying the public by such mean and base methods. But, notwithstanding I have rejected everything that is loose and immoral, and everything that might create uneasiness in the minds of particular persons, I find that the demand for my papers has increased every month since their first appearance in the world. This does not, perhaps, reflect so much honour upon myself as on my readers, who give a much greater attention to discourses of virtue and morality than ever I expected, or indeed could hope.

When I broke loose from that great body of writers who have employed their wit and parts in propagating vice and irreligion, I did not question but I should be treated as an odd kind of fellow that had a mind to appear singular in my way of writing; but the general reception I have found convinces me that the world is not so corrupt as we are apt to imagine, and that if those men of parts who have been employed in vitiating the age had endeavoured to rectify and amend it they needed not to have sacrificed their good sense and virtue to their fame and

reputation. No man is so sunk in vice and ignorance but there are still some hidden seeds of goodness and knowledge in him, which give him a relish of such reflections and speculations as have an aptness to improve the mind and make the heart better.[1]

THE CLUB, No. 2.—*The second paper of the "Spectator" introduces us to the imaginary coterie with which Addison and Steele surrounded themselves for the purpose of carrying on their work for the instruction and entertainment of the public. The list begins with Sir Roger de Coverley. In addition to this, the best-known character in the "Spectator," we have a barrister and a clergyman, both unnamed; Captain Sentry, a gallant soldier, nephew and heir to Sir Roger; Will Honeycomb, a gentleman of fashion, verging on old age;*[2] *and Sir Andrew Freeport, a successful merchant, who had*

[1] It need scarcely be said that Addison (who, though his authorship may have been an open secret, wrote anonymously for the *Spectator*) had never actually placed himself in the position of having to leave the ranks of those who employed their talents in propagating vice and irreligion. It would not be easy to find in contemporary literature a severer indictment of the popular press of Addison's day than in the above-quoted words.

[2] Will Honeycomb is supposed to impersonate Major Cleland, of the Life Guards, the father of a writer of considerable ability, author of many political tracts (*Addisoniana*, p. 43).

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amassed wealth from many lands, and "calls the sea the British Common."[1]

In a later paper (No. 34), written as only Addison could have written it, we learn that the several members of the coterie favour the editors of the "Spectator" with their criticism. We reproduce parts of this essay as throwing light on the supposed character and the humour of the critics.

I last night sat very late in company with this select body of friends, who entertained me with several remarks which they and others had made upon these my speculations. *Fashionable Will Honeycomb questions the wisdom of attacking the stage and making merry over such serious subjects as the equipage and dress of people of quality. Sir Andrew Freeport, the merchant, entirely dissents from Will Honeycomb, but warns Spectator off aldermen and citizens. The Templar differs from both the last speakers, thoroughly approv-*

[1] A prominent feature of the *Spectator* is the imaginary correspondents, with names suitable to their characters, whose letters are published, to be commented on, and through which sometimes positively, more often negatively, Spectator instructs the public. The following is a small selection of these symbolic names: Moses Greenbag, Hezekiah Thrift, Samuel Slack, Josiah Fribble, Anthony Gape, Abraham Froth, Peter Push, Humphrey Transfer, Tom Trusty, Tom Puzzle, Basil Plenty, John Trot, Michael Gander, Rebecca Ridinghood, Fanny Fickle, Amanda Lovelength, Lucinda Parley, Relicta Lovely.

ing what had been said of fashion and of city life, at the same time pointing out that raillery was quite misplaced when employed on the Inns of Court. My good friend, Sir Roger de Coverley, who had said nothing all this while, began his speech with a Pish! and told us that he wondered to see so many men of sense so very serious upon fooleries. "Let our good friend," says he, "attack everyone that deserves it; I would only advise you, Mr. Spectator," applying himself to me, "to take care how you meddle with country squires. They are the ornaments of the English nation, men of good heads and sound bodies; and, let me tell you, some of them take it ill of you that you mention fox-hunters with so little respect." *Captain Sentry followed by commending Spectator's prudence in his treatment of the army, and advised continued discretion on that subject.*

By this time I found that every subject of my speculations was taken away from me by one or other of the club, and began to think myself in the condition of the good man that had one wife who took a dislike to his grey hairs, and another to his black, until by their picking out what each had an aversion to they left his head altogether bald and naked.

At this point Spectator's "worthy friend the clergyman" came to the rescue. He told us that

he wondered any order of persons should think themselves too considerable to be advised. That it was not quality, but innocence, which exempted men from reproof. That vice and folly ought to be attacked wherever they could be met with, and especially when they were placed in high and conspicuous stations of life. He further added that my paper would only serve to aggravate the pains of poverty if it chiefly exposed those who are already depressed, and in some measure turned into ridicule by the meanness of their conditions and circumstances. He afterwards proceeded to take notice of the great use this paper might be to the public, by reprehending those vices which are too trivial for the chastisement of the law, and too fantastical for the cognisance of the pulpit. He then advised me to prosecute my undertaking with cheerfulness, and assured me that, whoever might be displeased with me, I should be approved by all those whose praises do honour to the persons on whom they are bestowed.

The whole club pays a particular deference to the discourse of this gentleman, and are drawn into what he says as much by the candid, ingenuous manner with which he delivers himself as by the strength of argument and force of reason which he makes use of. Will Honeycomb im-

mediately agreed that what he had said was right, and that for his part he would not insist upon the quarter which he had demanded for the ladies. Sir Andrew gave up the city with the same frankness. The Templar would not stand out, and was followed by Sir Roger and the Captain, who all agreed that I should be at liberty to carry the war into what quarter I pleased, provided I continued to combat with criminals in a body, and to assault the vice without hurting the person.

In No. 101 *Addison pictures to himself an imaginary historian writing of the reign of Queen Anne.* Among the several persons that flourished in this glorious reign, there is no question but that such a future historian as the person of whom I am speaking will make mention of the men of genius and learning who have now any figure in the British nation. For my own part, I often flatter myself with the honourable mention that will then be made of me, and have drawn up a paragraph in my own imagination that I fancy will not be altogether unlike what will be found in some page or other of this imaginary historian.

" It was under this reign," says he, " that the *Spectator* published those little diurnal essays which are still extant. We know very little of the name or person of this author except only

that he was a man of a very short face,[1] extremely addicted to silence, and so great a lover of knowledge that he made a voyage to Grand Cairo for no other reason but to take the measure of a pyramid. . . . He lived as a lodger at the house of a widow woman,[2] and was a great humorist in all parts of his life. This is all we can affirm with any certainty of his person and character. As for his speculations, notwithstanding the several obsolete words and obscure phrases of the age in which he lived, we still understand enough of them to see the diversions and characters of the English nation in his time; not but that we are to make allowance for the mirth and humour of the author, who has doubtless strained many representations of things beyond the truth.[3] For if we interpret his words in their

[1] The short face really belonged to Steele, the nominal editor of the *Spectator*, as may be seen from his portraits. Shortness of face does not strike one in the extant likenesses of Addison. There are many allusions to this characteristic of the *Spectator*, sometimes of a very comical nature—*e.g.*, No. 599, *The Cave of Trophonius*, an essay which bears the hall-mark of Addison's pen. It was certainly not written by Steele.

[2] See No. 12 on Addison settling himself in London, extracts from which will be found at the close of this appendix to Chapter I., p. 46.

[3] This proviso should not be regarded as a confession of exaggeration on Addison's part, but rather as adding emphasis to his condemnation of the follies he proceeds to notice.

literal meaning, we must suppose that women of the first quality used to pass away whole mornings at a puppet show; that they attested their principles by their patches; that an audience would sit out an evening to hear a dramatic performance written in a language which they did not understand; that chairs and flower-pots were introduced as actors upon the British stage; that a promiscuous assembly of men and women were allowed to meet at midnight in masks within the verge of the court, with many other improbabilities of the like nature.[1] We must, therefore, in these and the like cases, suppose that these remote hints and allusions aimed at some certain follies which were then in vogue, and which at present we have not any notion of. We may guess by several passages in the speculations that there were writers who endeavoured to detract from the works of this author; but as nothing of this nature is come down to us, we cannot guess at any objections that could be made to this paper. If we consider his style with that indulgence which we must show to old English writers, or if we look into the variety of his subjects, with those critical dissertations, moral reflections . . ." The following part of

[1] The anomalies and absurdities here enumerated were dealt with in the following numbers: 8, 14, 18, 22, 36, 81—all very entertaining papers.

the paragraph is so much to my advantage and beyond anything I can pretend to that I hope my reader will excuse me for not inserting it.

SPECTATOR SETTLES IN LONDON, No. 12.—*We may bring this appendix to an end by an extract from No.* 12, *in which Addison gives an account of his settling in London.*

At my coming to London it was some time before I could settle myself in a house to my liking. I was forced to quit my first lodgings by reason of an officious landlady that would be asking me every morning how I had slept. I then fell into an honest family, and lived very happily for above a week, when my landlord, who was a good-natured man, took it into his head that I wanted company, and therefore would frequently come into my chamber to keep me from being alone. This I bore for two or three days; but telling me one day that he was afraid I was melancholy, I thought it was high time for me to be gone, and accordingly took new lodgings that very night. About a week later I found my jolly landlord, who, as I said before, was an honest hearty man, had put me into an advertisement of the *Daily Courant*[1] in the following words:

[1] The *Daily Courant* was the first *daily* paper issued in England. It began its career three days after Anne's accession, March 11, 1702. The *London Post*, the *Postman*, the *Postboy*,

"Whereas a melancholy man left his lodgings on Thursday last in the afternoon, and was afterwards seen going towards Islington,[1] if anyone can give notice of him to R. B., fishmonger, in the Strand, he shall be well rewarded for his pains." As I am the best man in the world to keep my own counsel, and my landlord the fishmonger not knowing my name, this accident of my life was never discovered to this day.

I am now settled with a widow woman, who has a great many children, and complies with my humour in everything. I do not remember that we have exchanged a word together these five years; my coffee comes into my chamber every

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the *Flying Post*, and other papers, had preceded the *Daily Courant*, but were only published thrice a week. The *Daily Courant*, soon after its start, passed into the hands of Samuel Buckley, who afterwards printed the *Spectator*. See *Spectator*, No. 1. It supported the Whig interest, and was therefore in favour with Addison and Steele. In 1735 it was absorbed in the *Daily Gazetteer*.

[1] From *Addisoniana* (vol. i., p. 4) it would appear that Addison had a summer residence at Islington, then a country village and a popular watering-place. The discovery of chalybeate waters had added to its attractions. Addison is known also to have lodged at Sandy End, Chelsea. Some of his letters were written from the Cockpit, Westminster where Steele lived and edited the *Spectator*. The Cockpit was a block of buildings largely used in Spectator's time as Government offices, on, or nearly on, the site of the cockpit erected by Henry VIII. opposite Whitehall.

morning without asking for it; if I want a fire I point to my chimney; if water, to my basin, upon which my landlady nods, as much as to say she takes my meaning, and immediately obeys my signals. She has likewise modelled her family so well that when her little boy offers to pull me by the coat or prattle in my face, his eldest sister immediately calls him off, and bids him not disturb the gentleman. At my first entering into the family I was troubled with the civility of their rising up to me every time I came into the room, but my landlady, observing that upon these occasions I always cried Pish and went out again, has forbidden any such ceremony to be used in the house; so that at present I walk into the kitchen or parlour without being taken notice of, or giving any interruption to the business or discourse of the family. In short, I move up and down the house, and enter into all companies with the same liberty as a cat, or any other domestic animal, and am as little suspected of telling anything that I hear or see.

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CHAPTER II

THE "SPECTATOR" AS GUIDE, PHILOSOPHER AND FRIEND

THERE is nothing, *says the "Spectator,"* which we receive with so much reluctance as advice. We look upon the man who gives it as offering an affront to our understanding, and treating us like children or idiots. We consider the instruction as implicit censure, and the zeal which anyone shows for our good on such an occasion as a piece of presumption or impertinence. The truth of it is, the person who pretends to advise, does, in that particular, exercise a superiority over us, and can have no other reason for it but that, in comparing us with himself, he thinks us defective, either in our conduct or our understanding. For these reasons there is nothing so difficult as the art of making advice agreeable, and, indeed, all the writers, both ancient and modern, have distinguished themselves among one another, according to the perfection at which they have arrived in this art (No. 512, *Addison*).

When, therefore, Spectator assumed the rôle of

counsellor to his fellow-mortals, he did not shut his eyes to the difficulty of the task he had undertaken. And it may be truly said that if ever a man succeeded in giving advice not merely without offence, but even palatably, to those to whom it was given, it was Joseph Addison.

Spectator has much that is wisely said on the virtue of contentment (No. 574). I was once engaged in discourse with a Rosicrucian about the "great secret" . . . it was amusing to hear this religious adept descanting on his pretended discovery. He talked of the secret as of a spirit which lived within an emerald, and converted everything that was near it to the highest perfection it was capable of. "It gives a lustre," says he, "to the sun, and water to the diamond. It irradiates every metal and enriches lead with all the properties of gold. It heightens smoke into flame, flame into light, and light into glory." He further added that "a single ray of it dissipates pain and care and melancholy from the person on whom it falls. In short," says he, "its presence naturally changes every place into a kind of heaven." After he had gone on for some time in this unintelligible cant, I found that he jumbled natural and moral ideas together into the same discourse, and that his great secret was nothing else but content.

This virtue does indeed produce in some measure all those effects which the alchemist usually ascribes to what he calls the philosopher's stone; and if it does not bring riches, it does the same thing by banishing the desire of them. . . . Among the many methods which might be made use of for the acquiring of this virtue, I shall only mention the two following: First of all, a man should always consider how much he has more than he wants; and, secondly, how much more unhappy he might be than he really is. . . . Foolish men are more apt to consider what they have lost than what they possess, and to fix their eyes upon those who are richer than themselves rather than on those who are under greater difficulties. All the real pleasures and conveniences of life lie in a narrow compass; but it is the humour of mankind to be always looking forward, and straining after one who has got the start of them in wealth and honour. . . . In the second place, everyone ought to reflect how much more unhappy he might be than he really is. . . . I like the story of the honest Dutchman, who, upon breaking his leg by a fall from the mainmast, told the standers-by it was a great mercy that it was not his neck. To which, since I am got into quotations, give me leave to add the saying of an old philosopher, who, after having

invited some of his friends to dine with him, was ruffled by his wife, who came into the room in a passion, and threw down the table that stood before them. "Everyone," says he, "has his calamity, and he is a happy man that has no greater than this." We find an instance to the same purpose in the life of Dr. Hammond, written by Dr. Fell. As this good man was troubled with a complication of distempers, when he had the gout upon him, he used to thank God it was not the stone; and when he had the stone, that he had not both these distempers on him at the same time.

I cannot conclude this essay without observing that there never was any system, besides that of Christianity, which could effectually produce in the mind of man the virtue I have hitherto been speaking of, etc. (*Addison*).

In Nos. 558 *and* 559 *we have a dream in illustration of the trite saying, "Better to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of."*[1]

It is a celebrated thought of Socrates that if all the misfortunes of mankind were cast into a public stock, in order to be equally distributed

[1] Dr. Johnson used to say that this essay on the burthens of mankind (No. 558) was the most exquisite he ever read. See *Essay on the Life and Genius of Samuel Johnson*, by Arthur Murphy.

among the whole species, those who now think themselves the most unhappy would prefer the share they are already possessed of before that which would fall to them by such a division. . . . As I was ruminating on this remark, and seated in my elbow-chair, I insensibly fell asleep, when on a sudden methought there was a proclamation made by Jupiter that every mortal should bring in his griefs and calamities, and throw them together in a heap. There was a large plain appointed for this purpose. I took my stand in the centre of it, and saw with a great deal of pleasure the whole human species marching one after another, and throwing down their several loads, which immediately grew up into a prodigious mountain that seemed to rise above the clouds.

There was a certain lady of a thin, airy shape, who was very active in this solemnity. She carried a magnifying glass in one of her hands, and was clothed in a loose, flowing robe embroidered with several figures of fiends and spectres that discovered themselves in a thousand chimerical shapes as her garment hovered in the wind. There was something wild and distracted in her looks. Her name was Fancy. She led up every mortal to the appointed place, after having very officiously assisted him in making up his pack and

laying it upon his shoulders. My heart melted within me to see my fellow-creatures groaning under their respective burdens, and to consider that prodigious bulk of human calamities which lay before me.

There were, however, several persons who gave me great diversion on this occasion. I observed one bringing in a fardel very carefully concealed under an old embroidered cloak, which, on his throwing it into the heap, I discovered to be Poverty. Another, after a great deal of puffing, threw down his luggage, which, upon examining, I found to be his wife.

There were multitudes of lovers saddled with very whimsical burdens, composed of darts and flames; but what was very odd, though they sighed as if their hearts would break under their bundles of calamities, they could not persuade themselves to cast them into the heap when they came up to it, but, after a few faint efforts, shook their heads and marched away as heavy loaden as they came. I saw multitudes of old women throw down their wrinkles, and several young ones who stripped themselves of a tawny skin. There were very great heaps of red noses, large lips, and rusty teeth. The truth of it is, that I was surprised to see the greatest part of the mountain made up of bodily deformities. Observing one advancing

towards the heap with a larger cargo than ordinary upon his back, I found upon his near approach that it was only a natural hump, which he disposed of with great joy of heart among this collection of human miseries. There were likewise distempers of all sorts, though I could not but observe that there were many more imaginary than real. One little packet I could not but take notice of, which was a complication of all the diseases incident to human nature, and was in the hand of a great many fine people; this was called the Spleen. But what most of all surprised me was a remark I made that there was not a single vice or folly thrown into the whole heap, at which I was very much astonished, having concluded within myself that everyone would take this opportunity of getting rid of his passions, prejudices, and frailties.

I took notice in particular of a very profligate fellow, who I did not question came loaded with his crimes; but upon searching into his bundle, I found that, instead of throwing his guilt from him, he had only laid down his memory. He was followed by another worthless rogue, who flung away his modesty instead of his ignorance.

When the whole race of mankind had thus cast their burdens, the phantom which had been so busy on this occasion, seeing me an idle Spectator

of what passed, approached towards me. I grew uneasy at her presence, when of a sudden she held her magnifying glass full before my eyes. I no sooner saw my face in it, but I was startled at the shortness of it, which now appeared to me in its utmost aggravation. The immoderate breadth of the features made me very much out of humour with my own countenance, upon which I threw it from me like a mask. It happened very luckily that one who stood by me had just before thrown down his visage, which it seems was too long for him. It was, indeed, extended to a most shameful length; I believe the very chin was, modestly speaking, as long as my whole face. We had both of us an opportunity of mending ourselves; and all the contributions being now brought in, every man was at liberty to exchange his misfortunes for those of another person. But as there arose many new incidents in the sequel of my vision, I shall reserve them for the subject of my next paper.

No. 559.—In my last paper I gave my reader a sight of that mountain of miseries which was made up of those several calamities that afflict the minds of men. . . . As we were regarding very attentively this confusion of miseries, this chaos of calamity, Jupiter issued out a second proclamation, that everyone was now at liberty to exchange

his affliction, and to return to his habitation with any such other bundle as should be delivered to him.

Upon this, Fancy began again to disturb herself, and, parcelling out the whole heap with incredible activity, recommended to everyone his particular packet. The hurry and confusion at this time was not to be expressed. Some observations which I made upon the occasion I shall communicate to the public. A venerable grey-headed man who had laid down the colic, and who I found wanted an heir to his estate, snatched up an undutiful son that had been thrown into the heap by an angry father. The graceless youth, in less than a quarter of an hour, pulled the old gentleman by the beard, and had like to have knocked his brains out, so that, meeting the true father, who came towards him with a fit of the gripes, he begged him to take his son again, and give him back his colic; but they were incapable either of them to recede from the choice they had made. A poor galley slave who had thrown down his chains took up the gout in their stead, but made such wry faces that one might easily perceive he was no great gainer by the bargain. It was pleasant enough to see the several exchanges that were made for sickness against poverty, hunger against want of appetite, and care against pain.

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The female world were very busy among themselves in bartering for features: one was trucking a lock of grey hairs for a carbuncle, another was making over a short waist for a pair of round shoulders, and a third cheapening a bad face for a lost reputation; but on all these occasions there was not one of them who did not think the new blemish, as soon as she had got it into her possession, much more disagreeable than the old one. I made the same observation on every other misfortune or calamity which everyone in the assembly brought upon himself in lieu of what he had parted with; whether it be that all the evils which befall us are in some measure suited and proportioned to our strength, or that every evil becomes more supportable by our being accustomed to it, I shall not determine.

I could not from my heart forbear pitying the poor, hump-backed gentleman mentioned in the former paper, who went off a very well-shaped person with a stone in his bladder; nor the fine gentleman who had struck up this bargain with him, that limped through a whole assembly of ladies with a pair of shoulders peeping over his head.

I must not omit my own particular adventure. My friend with a long visage had no sooner taken upon him my short face, but he made such

a grotesque figure in it that, as I looked upon him, I could not forbear laughing at myself, insomuch that I put my own face out of countenance. The poor gentleman was so sensible of the ridicule that I found he was ashamed of what he had done; on the other side, I found that I myself had no great reason to triumph, for as I went to touch my forehead I missed the place, and clapped my finger on my upper lip. Besides, as my nose was exceeding prominent, I gave it two or three unlucky knocks as I was playing my hand about my face, and aiming at some other part of it. I saw two other gentlemen by me who were in the same ridiculous circumstances. These had made a foolish swop between a couple of thick bandy legs and two long trapsticks that had no calves to them. One of these looked like a man walking upon stilts, and was so lifted up into the air, above his ordinary height, that his head turned round with it; while the other made such awkward circles, as he attempted to walk, that he scarcely knew how to move forward upon his new supporters. Observing him to be a pleasant kind of fellow, I stuck my cane in the ground, and told him I would lay him a bottle of wine that he did not march up to it on a line that I drew for him in a quarter of an hour.

The heap was at last distributed among the

two sexes, who made a most piteous sight as they wandered up and down under the pressure of their several burdens. The whole plain was filled with murmurs and complaints, groans and lamentations. Jupiter at length, taking compassion on the poor mortals, ordered them a second time to lay down their loads, with a design to give everyone his own again. They discharged themselves with a great deal of pleasure, after which the phantom who had led them into such gross delusions was commanded to disappear. There was sent in her stead a goddess of a quite different figure; her motions were steady and composed, and her aspect serious, but cheerful. She every now and then cast her eyes towards heaven, and fixed them upon Jupiter; her name was Patience. She had no sooner placed herself by the Mount of Sorrows, but, what I thought very remarkable, the whole heap sunk to such a degree that it did not appear a third part so big as it was before. She afterwards returned every man his proper calamity, and, teaching him how to bear it in the most commodious manner, he marched off with it contentedly, being very well pleased that he had not been left to his own choice as to the kind of evils which fell to his lot.

Besides the several pieces of morality to be drawn out of this vision, I learnt from it never

to repine at my own misfortunes, or to envy the happiness of another, since it is impossible for any man to form a right judgment of his neighbour's sufferings; for which reason also I have determined never to think too lightly of another's complaints, but to regard the sorrows of my fellow-creatures with sentiments of humanity and compassion.[1]

No. 549.—*There is much quiet common sense, practical wisdom, and pious sentiment charmingly expressed in the following letter from Sir Andrew Freeport on retiring from business after making his fortune in it.*

Good Mr. Spectator,

Notwithstanding my friends at the club have always rallied me, when I have talked of retiring from business, and repeated to me one of my own sayings that "a merchant has never enough until he has got a little more"; I can now inform you that there is one in the world who thinks he has enough, and is determined to pass the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of what he has. You know me so well that I need not tell you I mean, by the enjoyments of my possessions, the making of them useful to the

[1] Nos. 558 and 559 are not guaranteed on Tickell's authority as the work of Addison, but they surely have the hall-mark of his pen.

public. As the greatest part of my estate has been hitherto of an unsteady and volatile nature, either tost upon seas or fluctuating in funds, it is now fixed and settled in substantial acres and tenements. I have removed it from the uncertainty of stocks, winds, and waves, and disposed of it in a considerable purchase. This will give me great opportunity of being charitable in my way—that is, in setting my poor neighbours to work, and giving them a comfortable subsistence out of their own industry. My gardens, my fish ponds, my arable and pasture grounds, shall be my several hospitals, or rather workhouses, in which I propose to maintain a great many indigent persons who are now starving in my neighbourhood. I have got a fine spread of improvable lands, and in my own thoughts am already ploughing up some of them, fencing others, planting woods, and draining marshes. In fine, as I have my share in the surface of this island, I am resolved to make it as beautiful a spot as any in Her Majesty's dominions; at least, there is not an inch of it which shall not be cultivated to the best advantage, and do its utmost for its owner. As in my mercantile employment I so disposed of my affairs that from whatever corner of the compass the wind blew it was bringing home one or other of my ships, I hope as a husbandman

to contrive it so that not a shower of rain or a glimpse of sunshine shall fall upon my estate without bettering some part of it, and contributing to the products of the season. You know that it has been hitherto my opinion of life that it is thrown away when it is not some way useful to others. But when I am riding out by myself in the fresh air on the open heath that lies by my house, I find several other thoughts growing up in me. I am now of opinion that a man of my age may find business enough on himself, by setting his mind in order, preparing it for another world, and reconciling it to the thoughts of death. I must therefore acquaint you that, besides those usual methods of charity of which I have before spoken, I am at this very instant finding out a convenient place where I may build an almshouse, which I intend to endow very handsomely, for a dozen superannuated husbandmen. It will be a great pleasure to say my prayers twice a day[1] with men of my own years, who all of them, as well as myself, may have their thoughts taken up how they shall die, rather than how they shall live. I remember an excellent saying that I learned at school, *Finis coronat opus*. You know

[1] Morning and evening prayer through the week in parish churches was evidently no uncommon thing in Queen Anne's reign.

best whether it be in Virgil or in Horace; it is my business to apply it. If your affairs will permit you to take the country air with me sometimes, you shall find an apartment fitted up for you, and shall be every day entertained with beef or mutton of my own feeding, fish out of my own ponds; and fruit out of my own gardens. You shall have free egress and regress about my house, without having any questions asked you, and, in a word, such an hearty welcome as you may expect from your most sincere friend and humble servant, ANDREW FREEPORT (*Addison*).

One of Spectator's imaginary correspondents (*No.* 430) *remarks that it is a great reproach to society and "an eclipse to the glory of all other charity that there should be a poor man unrelieved or poor rogue unpunished." In a later paper Spectator gives us some of his humorous thoughts on charitable relief* (No. 472).

If all the rich who are lame in the gout, from a life of ease, pleasure, and luxury, would help those who have it without a previous life of pleasure, and add a few of such laborious men who are become lame from unhappy blows, falls, or other accidents of age or sickness; I say, would such gouty persons administer to the necessities of men disabled like themselves, the consciousness

of such a behaviour would be the best julep, cordial, and anodyne in the feverish, faint and tormenting vicissitudes of that miserable distemper. . . . These classes of charity would certainly bring down blessings upon an age and people; and if men were not petrified with the love of this world against all sense of the commerce which ought to be among them, it would not be an unreasonable bill for a poor man in the agony of pain, aggravated by want and poverty, to draw upon a sick alderman after this form:

"MR. BASIL PLENTY, SIR,

"You have the gout and stone with sixty thousand pounds sterling; I have the gout and stone, not worth one farthing; I shall pray for you, and desire you would pay the bearer twenty shillings for value received from, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"LAZARUS HOPEFUL."

The reader's own imagination will suggest to him the reasonableness of such correspondences, and diversify them into a thousand forms (*Steele*).

No. 232.—*Whether the Spectator exercised discrimination in the matter of almsgiving there is little to show, but of the folly of indiscriminate charity he was well aware.* The other day, as soon as we were got into his (Sir Andrew Freeport's)

chariot, two or three beggars on each side hung upon the doors, and solicited our charity with the usual rhetoric of a sick wife or husband at home, three or four helpless little children all starving with cold and hunger. We were forced to part with some money to get rid of their importunity; and then we proceeded on our journey with the blessings and acclamations of these people.

"Well, then," says Sir Andrew, "we go off with the prayers and good wishes of the beggars, and perhaps too our healths will be drunk at the next alehouse; so all we shall be able to value ourselves upon is that we have promoted the trade of the victualler and the excises of the Government" (Z., *Martyn*).[1]

No. 430.—I looked out of my window the other morning earlier than ordinary, and saw a blind beggar, an hour before the passage he stands in is frequented, with a needle and thread, thriftily mending his stockings. My astonishment was still greater when I beheld a lame fellow, whose legs were too big to walk, within an hour after bring him a pot of ale. I will not mention the shakings, distortions, and convulsions, which

[1] Or Hughes. There is much uncertainty as to the authorship of papers signed Z.—namely, Nos. 232, 292, 316, 404, 408, 425, 467 (*Aitken*).

many of them practise to gain an alms; but sure I am they ought to be taken care of in this condition, either by the beadle or the magistrate (*Steele*).

No. 232.—I see no occasion for this charity to common beggars, since every beggar is an inhabitant of a parish, and every parish is taxed to the maintenance of their own poor. For my own part, I cannot be mightily pleased with the laws which have done this, which have provided better to feed than to employ the poor. We have a tradition from our forefathers that after the first of those laws were made, they were insulted with that famous song:

> "Hang sorrow, and cast away care,
> The parish is bound to find us," etc.[1]

And if we will be so good-natured as to maintain them without work, they can do no less in return than sing us "The Merry Beggars."

What then? Am I against all acts of charity?

[1] The laws chiefly in Spectator's mind were statutes 39 and 43 Eliz., by which overseers were appointed and parishes charged to maintain their helpless poor, and find work for the able-bodied. By 8 and 9 Will. III. persons in receipt of parish relief were required to wear a badge on the shoulder of the right sleeve to denote the fact, the badge consisting of a large P, together with the first letter of the parish responsible for their maintenance. The workhouse was not instituted until 1723.

God forbid! I know of no virtue in the gospel that is in more pathetic expressions recommended to our practice. "I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; naked, and ye clothed Me not; a stranger, and ye took Me not in; sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not." Our blessed Saviour treats the exercise or neglect of charity towards a poor man as the performance or breach of this duty towards Himself. I shall endeavour to obey the will of my Lord and Master, and therefore, if an industrious man shall submit to the hardest labour and coarsest fare, rather than endure the shame of taking relief from the parish or asking it in the street, this is the hungry, the thirsty, the naked; and I ought to believe, if any man is come hither for shelter against persecution or oppression, this is the stranger, and I ought to take him in.[1] If any countryman of our own is fallen into the hands of infidels, and lives in a state of miserable captivity, this is the man in prison, and I should contribute to his ransom. I ought to give to an hospital of invalids, to recover as many useful subjects as I can; but I shall bestow none of my bounties upon an almshouse of idle people, and for the same reason I shall not think it a reproach

[1] The allusion is to refugees from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

to me if I had withheld my charity from those common beggars (Z., *Martyn*).

An object of charity little regarded by the general public does not appeal in vain to the Spectator—namely, the negro. Speaking of the power of education (in No. 215*) in drawing out latent capacities and virtues, he continues:* When one hears of negroes who, upon the death of their masters or upon changing their service, hang themselves upon the next tree, as it frequently happens in our American plantations, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expresses itself in so dreadful manner? What might not that savage greatness of soul which appears in these poor wretches on many occasions be raised to, were it rightly cultivated? And what colour of excuse can there be for the contempt with which we treat this part of our species, that we should not put them upon the common foot of humanity; that we should only set an insignificant fine upon the man who murders them; nay, that we should, as much as in us lies, cut them off from the prospects of happiness in another world as well as in this, and deny them that which we look upon as the proper means for attaining it? (*Addison*). *But, strange as it may appear, there is no protest from the Christian and cultured humanitarian who wrote these words against the*

practice of the slave trade or the institution of slavery.[1]

No. 125.—*Spectator has much to say in deprecation of the violent party spirit, which was as active in the early eighteenth century as in any period of English history.* My worthy friend Sir Roger, when we are talking of the malice of parties, very frequently tells us an accident that happened to him when he was a schoolboy, which was at the time when the feuds ran high between the Roundheads and Cavaliers. This worthy knight, being then but a stripling, had

[1] The English slave trade was begun in 1562 by Sir John Hawkins. No. 215 of the *Spectator* was published in November, 1711. Addison, the writer of it, lived to see a vast development of the slave trade, with its unspeakable horrors. The Peace of Utrecht in 1713 gave an immense impetus to the English branch of this traffic. By that treaty the English Government secured to the English a monopoly for supplying slaves to the Spanish colonies, the monopoly being granted to the South Sea Company. From this time the English Government in every way promoted the slave trade. See Lecky, *History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii., p. 243. The charge of cutting the negro off from the prospects of happiness in another world is doubtless an allusion to the fact that many who approved of enslaving pagans questioned the moral right of holding Christians in bondage. This gave rise to a popular belief that baptism would invalidate the legal right of a master to the possession of his slave. Partly as the consequence of this opinion little was done for the conversion of the slave. See Lecky, *History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii., p. 248.

occasion to inquire which was the way to St. Anne's Lane, upon which the person whom he spoke to, instead of answering his question, called him a young popish cur, and asked him who had made Anne a saint. The boy, being in some confusion, inquired of the next he met which was the way to Anne's Lane, but was called a prick-eared cur for his pains, and, instead of being shown the way, was told she had been a saint before he was born, and would be one after he was hanged.[1] "Upon this," says Sir Roger, "I did not think fit to repeat the former question, but, going into every lane of the neighbourhood, asked what they called the name of that lane."[2] By which ingenious artifice he found out the place he inquired after without giving offence to any party. Sir Roger generally closes this narrative with reflections on the mischief that parties do in the country: how they spoil good neighbourhood, and make honest gentlemen hate one another; besides that, they manifestly tend to the

[1] Sir Walter Scott must have had this delightful story in his mind when Old Buck, the antiquary, says to Edie Ochiltree, the bedesman, "Why, you old fool, it was here before you were born, and will be after you are hanged, man!"

[2] St. Anne's Lane, Old Pye Street, was situated in Westminster, but it has now disappeared; notable as the birthplace of Henry Purcell, his father, Henry Purcell, being a gentleman of the Chapel Royal.

prejudice of the land tax and the destruction of the game.

There cannot be a greater judgment befall a country than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a Government into two distinct people, and makes them greater strangers and more averse to one another than if they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a division are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give to the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person. This influence is very fatal both to men's morals and their understandings; it sinks the virtue of a nation, and not only so, but destroys even common sense.

A furious party spirit, when it rages in its full violence, exerts itself in civil war and bloodshed; and when it is under its greatest restraints, naturally breaks out in falsehood, destruction, calumny, and a partial administration of justice. In a word, it fills a nation with spleen and rancour, and extinguishes all the seeds of good nature, compassion, and humanity. . . . The minds of many good men among us appear soured with party principles, and alienated from one another in such a manner as seems to me altogether inconsistent with the dictates either of reason

or religion. . . .[1] If this party spirit has so ill an effect on our morals, it has likewise a very great one upon our judgments. We often hear a poor insipid paper or pamphlet cried up, and sometimes a noble piece depreciated, by those who are of a different principle from the author. One who is actuated by this spirit is almost under an incapacity of discerning either real blemishes or beauties. A man of merit in a different principle is like an object seen in two different mediums, that appears crooked or broken, however straight and entire it may be in itself. For this reason there is scarce a person of any figure in England who does not go by two contrary characters, as opposite to one another as light and darkness. . . .[2] Books are valued upon the

[1] How uncompromisingly Addison set religion above politics may be shown from the following words: "If a man would but seriously consider how much greater comfort he would receive in the last moments of his life from a reflection that he has made one virtuous man than that he has made a thousand Tories, we should not see the zeal of so many good men turned off from its proper end, and employed in making such a kind of converts. What satisfaction will it be to an immoral man at such a time to think he is a good Whig, or to one that is conscious of sedition, perjury, or rebellion, that he dies with the reputation of a high churchman?" (*Freeholder*, No. 37).

[2] Mr. Courthope, writing of the reception given to Addison's tragedy *Cato*, says, "In 1713 the rage of the contending factions was at its highest point."

like considerations. An abusive, scurrilous style passes for satire, and a dull scheme of party notions is called fine writing.

There is one piece of sophistry practised by both sides, and that is the taking of any scandalous story that has been ever whispered or invented of a private man for a known undoubted truth, and raising suitable speculations upon it. Calumnies that have been never proved, or have been often refuted, are the ordinary postulatums of these infamous scribblers, upon which they proceed as upon first principles granted by all men, though in their hearts they know they are false, or at best very doubtful (*Addison*).

In the next paper (*No.* 126) *Addison pursues the subject. He begins in the strain of humour. He suggests that honest men of all parties should enter into an association for mutual defence. He has prepared the following form for subscription, "which may express their intentions in the most plain and simple manner":*

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed do solemnly declare that we do in our consciences believe two and two make four, and that we shall adjudge any man whatsoever to be our enemy who endeavours to persuade us to the contrary. We are likewise ready to maintain with the hazard of all that is near and dear to us that six

is less than seven in all times and in all places; that ten will not be more three years hence than it is at present. We do also firmly declare that it is our resolution, so long as we live, to call black black, and white white. And we shall upon all occasions oppose such persons that upon any day of the year shall call black white, or white black, with the utmost peril of our lives and fortunes."

In No. 507 *Spectator takes up again the subject of violent party spirit, especially in respect of the encouragement it lends to mendacity.* There are many authors who have shown wherein the malignity of a lie consists, and set forth in proper colours the heinousness of the offence. I shall here consider one particular kind of this crime which has not been so much spoken to: I mean that abominable practice of party lying. This vice is so very predominant among us at present that a man is thought of no principles who does not propagate a certain system of lies. The coffee-houses are supported by them, the press is choked with them, eminent authors live upon them. Our bottle conversation is so infected with them that a party lie is grown as fashionable an entertainment as a lively catch or a merry story. The truth of it is half the great talkers of the nation would be struck dumb were this

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fountain of discourse dried up. There is, however, one advantage resulting from this detestable practice: the very appearances of truth are so little regarded that lies are at present discharged in the air, and begin to hurt nobody. When we hear a party story from a stranger, we consider whether he is a Whig or a Tory that relates it, and immediately conclude they are words, of course, in which the honest gentleman designs to recommend his zeal without any concern for his veracity. A man is looked upon as bereft of all common sense that gives credit to the relations of party writers; nay, his own friends shake their heads at him, and consider him in no other light than as an officious fool or a well-meaning idiot. When it was formerly the fashion to husband a lie, and trump it up in some extraordinary emergency, it generally did execution, and was not a little serviceable to the faction that made use of it; but at present every man is upon his guard: the artifice has been too often repeated to take effect.

I have frequently wondered to see men of probity, who would scorn to utter a falsehood for their own particular advantage, give so readily into a lie when it becomes the voice of their faction, notwithstanding they are thoroughly sensible of it as such. How is it possible for those who are men of honour in their persons

thus to become notorious liars in their party? (*Addison*).

As for envy among the representatives of literature, so for professional jealousy, Spectator has a word of rebuke. In No. 484 *Steele draws a contrast between the modern English and the ancient Roman lawyer, much to the disadvantage of the former. The modesty of beginners, he remarks, instead of being placed to their credit, and eliciting sympathy, is made a subject of ridicule, and a handle for hindering their advancement.* It may be a matter worth discussing why that which made a youth so amiable to the ancients should make him appear so ridiculous to the moderns, and why, in our days, there should be neglect, and even oppression, of young beginners, instead of that protection which was the pride of theirs. In the profession spoken of it is obvious to everyone whose attendance is required at Westminster Hall with what difficulty a youth of any modesty has been permitted to make an observation that could in no wise detract from the merit of his elders, and is absolutely necessary for the advancing his own. I have often seen one of these not only molested in his utterance of something very pertinent, but even plundered of his question, and by a strong Serjeant shouldered out of his rank, which he has recovered with much difficulty and confusion.

Spectator points out the contrast of such conduct with that of Pliny, the foremost lawyer of his day. But, he urges, the modest man must help himself by fighting this bashfulness, or, however brilliant his parts, he will be beaten out of the field by men of, it may be, far less intellectual power than himself.

I must confess, when I have seen Charles Frankair rise up with a commanding mien and torrent of handsome words, talk a mile off the purpose, and drive down twenty bashful boobies of ten times his sense, who at the same time were envying his impudence and despising his understanding, it has been a matter of great mirth to me; but it soon ended in a secret lamentation that the fountains of everything praiseworthy in these realms, the Universities, should be so muddled with a false sense of this virtue as to produce men capable of being so abused (*Steele*).

No. 99.—*Here the practice of duelling is arraigned by Addison. The paper ends as follows:* Death is not sufficient to deter men who make it their glory to despise it; but if everyone that fought a duel were to stand in the pillory, it would quickly lessen the number of these imaginary men of honour, and put an end to so absurd a practice.

When honour is a support to virtuous principles and runs parallel with the laws of God and our country, it cannot be too much cherished and encouraged; but when the dictates of honour are contrary to those of religion and equity, they are the greatest depravations of human nature, by giving wrong ambitions and false ideas of what is good and laudable, and should therefore be exploded by all Governments and driven out as the bane and plague of human society.

In No. 399 *Addison deals with the sin of hypocrisy.* Hypocrisy at the fashionable end of the town is very different from hypocrisy in the city. The modish hypocrite endeavours to appear more vicious than he really is, the other kind of hypocrite more virtuous. The former is afraid of everything that has the show of religion in it, and would be thought engaged in many criminal gallantries and amours which he is not really guilty of. The latter assumes a face of sanctity, and covers a multitude of vices under a seeming religious deportment.

But there is another kind of hypocrisy which differs from both these, and which I intend to make the subject of this paper: I mean that hypocrisy by which a man does not only deceive the world, but very often imposes on himself that hypocrisy which conceals his own heart from

him, and makes him believe he is more virtuous than he really is, and either not attend to his vices, or mistake even his vices for his virtues. It is this fatal hypocrisy and self-deceit which is taken notice of in those words: "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults." . . .

I shall conclude this essay with observing that the two kinds of hypocrisy I have here spoken of —namely, that of deceiving the world and that of imposing on ourselves—are touched with wonderful beauty in the hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm. The folly of the first kind of hypocrisy is there set forth by reflections on God's omniscience and omnipresence, which are celebrated in as noble strains of poetry as any other I ever met with, either sacred or profane. The other kind of hypocrisy, whereby a man deceives himself, is intimated in the two last verses, where the Psalmist addresses himself to the great searcher of hearts in that emphatical petition: "Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart; prove me, and examine my thoughts. Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (*Addison.*) . . .

Political bribery and corruption had not assumed in the day of the "Spectator" the gigantic propor-

tions attained under the administration of Walpole, but the honourable temper of Addison would find much from this point of view to censure in the political world with which he was so well acquainted. In No. 239 *Spectator does not specify political bribery, but it could not have been absent from his mind when he wrote the following passage. Having noticed other forms of argument — argumentum baculinum (otherwise club law), the argument of strong battalions (ratio ultima regum),*[1] *and argument by torture, as illustrated by the inquisition and at the stake—he proceeds:* There is another way of reasoning which seldom fails, though it be of a quite different nature to that I have last mentioned. I mean, convincing a man by ready money, or, as it is ordinarily called, bribing a man to an opinion. This method has often proved successful where all the others have been made use of to no purpose. A man who is furnished with arguments from the mint will convince his antagonist much sooner than one

[1] "A certain grand monarch (Louis XIV.) was so sensible of his strength in this way of reasoning that he writ upon his great guns, *Ratio ultima regum*, 'The logic of Kings'; but, God be thanked, he is now pretty well baffled at his own weapons." According to Andrew Marvell, in his reply to his antagonist, Samuel Parker, "pillories, whipping-posts, galleys, rods, and axes are *ratio ultima cleri*, a clergyman's last argument—ay, and his first too."

who draws them from reason and philosophy. Gold is a wonderful clearer of the understanding; it dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant, accommodates itself to the meanest capacities; silences the loud and clamorous, and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible. Philip of Macedon was a man of most invincible reason this way. He refuted by it all the wisdom of Athens, confounded their statesmen, struck their orators dumb, and at length argued them out of all their liberties[1] (*Addison*).

In an age notorious for its venality, when political life was advancing towards the moral degradation that it reached under Walpole, Addison preserved a character untarnished by this stain. In the various public offices that he held opportunities for corrupt practice would constantly present themselves, but, as Mr. Courthope observes, " he appears to have acted strictly on that conception of public duty which he defines in one of his papers in the 'Spectator.'" In No. 469 *Addison deals with the qualifications for worthily fulfilling the duties (such as were his own) of important but subordinate posts. His sentiments are as sensible as they are high-minded.* A man is unfit for such a place of trust who is of

[1] Philip, King of Macedon, used to say that no city was impregnable whose gates were wide enough to admit a single mule-load of gold.

a sour, untractable nature, or has any other passion that makes him uneasy to those who approach him. Roughness of temper is apt to discountenance the timorous or modest. The proud man discourages those from approaching him who are of a mean condition, and who most want his assistance. The impatient man will not give himself time to be informed of the matter that lies before him. . . .

There are two other vicious qualities which render a man very unfit for such a place of trust. The first of these is a dilatory temper, which commits innumerable cruelties without design. The maxim which several have laid down for a man's conduct in ordinary life should be inviolable with a man in office: never to think doing to-morrow that which may be done to-day. A man who defers doing what ought to be done is guilty of injustice so long as he defers it. . . .

But, in the last place, there is no man so improper to be employed in business as he who is in any degree capable of corruption; and such an one is the man who, upon any pretence whatsoever, receives more than what is the stated and unquestionable fee of his office. Gratifications, tokens of thankfulness, dispatch money, and the like specious terms, are the pretences under which corruption very frequently shelters itself.

An honest man will, however, look on all these methods as unjustifiable, and will enjoy himself better in a moderate fortune that is gained with honour and reputation than in an overgrown estate that is cankered with the acquisitions of rapine and exaction (*Addison*).

CHAPTER III

THE "SPECTATOR" ON MEN

No. 93.—*We may perhaps begin this part of our selection by a quotation from Seneca, which is far from complimentary to human nature.* We all of us complain, saith Seneca, of the shortness of time, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives, says he, are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them (*Addison*).

No. 562.—*The Spectator introduces his readers to different types of men who, to his mind, do not adorn society. Here is the egoist.* The gentlemen of Port Royal, who were more eminent for their learning and humility than any other in France, banished the way of speaking in the first person out of all their works, as rising from vain-glory and self-conceit. To show their particular aversion to it, they branded this form of writing with the name of

an egotism,[1] a figure not to be found among the ancient rhetoricians.

The most violent egotism which I have met with in the course of my reading is that of Cardinal Wolsey (*ego et meus rex*, "I and my King"), as perhaps the most eminent egotist that ever appeared in the world was Montaigne, the author of the celebrated essays. This lively old Gascon has woven all his bodily infirmities into his works, and after having spoken of the faults or virtues of any other man, immediately publishes to the world how it stands with himself in that particular. Had he kept his own counsel, he might have passed for a much better man, though perhaps he would not have been so diverting an author. The title of an essay promises perhaps a discourse upon Virgil or Julius Cæsar, but when you look into it you are sure to meet with more upon Monsieur Montaigne than of either of them. The younger Scaliger, who seems to have been no great friend to this author, after having acquainted the world that his father sold herrings, adds these words: *La grande fadaise de Montaigne, qui a écrit qu'il aimoit mieux le vin blanc. Que diable a-t-on à faire de scavoir ce qu'il aime.* "For my part,"

[1] In Murray's *New English Dictionary* (Clarendon Press, Oxford), this is the earliest instance of the word *egotism* in the English language.

says Montaigne, "I am a great lover of your white wines." "What the devil signifies it to the public," says Scaliger, "whether he is a lover of white wines or red wines." . . .

I shall close this paper with a remark upon such as are egotists in conversation: these are generally the vain or shallow part of mankind, people being naturally full of themselves when they have nothing else in them. There is one kind of egotists which is very common in the world, though I do not remember that any writer has taken notice of them; I mean those empty, conceited fellows who repeat, as sayings of their own, or some of their particular friends, several jests which were made before they were born, and which everyone who has conversed in the world has heard a hundred times over. A forward young fellow of my acquaintance was very guilty of this absurdity; he would be always laying a new scene for some old piece of wit, and telling us that as he and Jack such-a-one were together, one or t'other of them had such a conceit on such an occasion, upon which he would laugh very heartily, and wonder the company did not join with him. When his mirth was over, I have often reprehended him out of Terence, *Tuumne obsecro te, hoc dictum erat? vetus credidi.* But finding him still incorrigible, and having

a kindness for the young coxcomb, who was otherwise a good-natured fellow, I recommended to his perusal the Oxford and Cambridge jests, with several little pieces of pleasantry of the same nature. Upon the reading of them he was under no small confusion to find that all his jokes had passed through several editions, and that what he thought was a new conceit, and had appropriated to his own use, had appeared in print before he or his ingenious friends were ever heard of. This had so good an effect upon him that he is content at present to pass for a man of plain sense in his ordinary conversation, and is never facetious but when he knows his company (*Addison*).

Akin to the egotist is the pedant. Of him Spectator treats in No. 105.[1] Will Honeycomb was last week producing two or three letters which he writ in his youth to a coquette lady. The raillery of them was natural, and well enough for a mere man of the town, but, very unluckily, several of the words were wrong spelt. Will laughed this off at first as well as he could, but finding himself pushed on all sides, and especially by the Templar, he told us with a little passion

[1] With this number of the *Spectator* should be compared two entertaining essays by Addison on pedantry in the *Tatler* (Nos. 158 and 165).

that he never liked pedantry in spelling, and that he spelt like a gentleman, and not like a scholar; upon this Will had recourse to his old topic of showing the narrow-spiritedness, the pride and ignorance of pedants, which he carried so far that, upon my retiring to my lodgings, I could not forbear throwing together such reflections as occurred to me on that subject.

A man who has been brought up among books, and is able to talk of nothing else, is a very indifferent companion, and what we call a pedant. But, methinks, we should enlarge the title and give it to everyone that does not know how to think out of his profession and particular way of life.

What is a greater pedant than a mere man of the town? Bar him the playhouses, a catalogue of the reigning beauties, and an account of a few fashionable distempers that have befallen him, and you strike him dumb. How many a pretty gentleman's knowledge lies all within the verge of the court! He would tell you the names of the principal favourites, repeat the shrewd sayings of a man of quality, whisper an intrigue that is not yet blown upon by common fame; or if the sphere of his observations is a little larger than ordinary, will perhaps enter into all the incidents, turns, and revolutions in a game of *ombre*. When he is gone thus far, he has shown you the whole

circle of his accomplishments; his parts are drained, and he is disabled from any further conversation. What are these but rank pedants? And yet these are the men who value themselves most on their exemption from the pedantry of colleges.

I might here mention the military pedant, who always talks in a camp, and is storming towns, making lodgments, and fighting battles from one end of the year to the other. Everything he speaks smells of gunpowder; if you take away his artillery from him, he has not a word to say for himself. I might likewise mention the law pedant, that is perpetually putting cases, repeating the transactions of Westminster Hall, wrangling with you on the most indifferent circumstances of life, and not to be convinced of the distance of a place or of the most trivial point in conversation but by dint of argument. The State pedant is wrapt up in news, and lost in politics. If you mention either of the kings of Spain or Poland, he talks very notably; but if you go out of the *Gazette*, you drop him. In short, a mere courtier, a mere soldier, a mere scholar, a mere anything, is an insipid pedantic character, and equally ridiculous.

Of all the species of pedants which I have mentioned, the book pedant is much the most

supportable; he has at least an exercised understanding, and a head which is full, though confused; so that a man who converses with him may often receive from him hints of things that are worth knowing, and what he may possibly turn to his own advantage, though they are of little use to the owner. The worst kind of pedants among learned men are such as are naturally endued with a very small share of common sense, and have read a great number of books without taste or discretion.

The truth of it is, learning, like travelling, and all other methods of improvement, as it finishes good sense, so it makes a silly man ten thousand times more insufferable by supplying variety of matter to his impertinence, and giving him an opportunity of abounding in absurdities (*Addison*).

No. 197.—*Here we have a picture of the disputatious man. Captain Sentry (one of the "Spectator" group) gives it as his opinion that "he has known but few pleaders that were tolerable company."*

The captain, who is a man of good sense, but dry conversation, was last night giving me an account of a discourse in which he had lately been engaged with a young wrangler in the law. "I was giving my opinion," says the captain, "without apprehending any debate that might arise

from it, of a general's behaviour in a battle that was fought some years before either the Templar or myself were born. The young lawyer immediately took me up, and by reasoning above a quarter of an hour upon a subject which I saw he understood nothing of, endeavoured to show me that my opinions were ill-grounded. Upon which," says the captain, " to avoid any further contests, I told him that truly I had not considered those several arguments which he had brought against me, and that there might be a great deal in them. 'Ay, but,' says my antagonist, who would not let me escape so, 'there are several things to be urged in favour of your opinion which you have omitted,' and thereupon began to shine on the other side of the question. Upon this," says the captain, " I came over to my first sentiments, and entirely acquiesced in his reasons for my doing so. Upon which the Templar again recovered his former posture, and confuted both himself and me a third time. In short," says my friend, " I found he was resolved to keep me at sword's length, and never let me close with him; so that I had nothing left but to hold my tongue, and give my antagonist free leave to smile at his victories, who, I found, like Hudibras, 'could still change sides and still confute'" (*Budgell*).

Man is far from exempt from the slavery of

fashion. No. 64 tells us that this fact might be illustrated and confirmed from many points of view. The writer confines himself to one—namely, that of court mourning. On this sombre topic Steele has much that is amusing to say. This fashion of sorrow is now become a generous part of ceremonial between princes and sovereigns, who, in the language of all nations, are styled brothers to each other, and put on the purple upon the death of any potentate with whom they live in amity. Courtiers, and all who wish themselves such, are immediately seized with grief from head to foot upon this disaster to their princes; so that one may know by the very buckles of a gentleman usher what degree of friendship any deceased monarch maintained with the court to which he belongs. A good courtier's habit and behaviour is hieroglyphical on these occasions. He deals much in whispers, and you may see he dresses according to the best intelligence.

The general affectation among men of appearing greater than they are makes the whole world run into the habit of the court. You see the lady who the day before was as various as a rainbow, upon the time appointed for beginning to mourn as dark as a cloud. This humour does not prevail only on those whose fortunes can

support any change in their equipage, nor on those only whose incomes demand the wantonness of new appearances, but on such also who have just enough to clothe them. An old acquaintance of mine, of ninety pounds a year, who has naturally the vanity of being a man of fashion deep at his heart, is very much put to it to bear the mortality of princes. He made a new black suit upon the death of the King of Spain, he turned it for the King of Portugal, and he now keeps his chamber while it is scouring for the emperor.[1] He is a good economist in his extravagance, and makes only a fresh black button upon his iron-grey suit for any potentate of small territories; he indeed adds his crape hat-band for a prince whose exploits he has admired in the *Gazette*; but whatever compliments may be made on these occasions, the true mourners are the mercers, silkmen, lacemen, and milliners. A prince of a merciful and royal disposition would reflect with great anxiety upon the prospect of his death, if he considered what numbers would be reduced

[1] The death of Charles II. of Spain, which gave occasion to the war of the Spanish Succession, took place in 1700; John V., King of Portugal, died in 1706, and the Emperor Joseph died (of small-pox) on April 17, 1711, less than a month before this paper was written. The black suit, that was now scouring for the Emperor, was therefore more than ten years old, and had been turned five years ago.

to misery by that accident only. He would think it of moment enough to direct that in the notification of his departure the honour done to him might be restrained to those of the household of the prince to whom it should be signified. He would think a general mourning to be in a less degree the same ceremony which is practised in barbarous nations of killing their slaves to attend the obsequies of their kings.

I had been wonderfully at a loss for many months together to guess at the character of a man who came now and then to our coffee-house. He ever ended a newspaper with this reflection, "Well, I see all the foreign princes are in good health." If you asked, "Pray, sir, what says the *Postman* from Vienna?" he answered, "Make us thankful, the German princes are all well." "What does he say from Barcelona?" "He does not speak but that the country agrees very well with the new queen." After very much inquiry, I found this man of universal loyalty was a wholesale dealer in silks and ribbons. His way is, it seems, if he hires a weaver or workman, to have it inserted in his articles, "that all this shall be well and truly performed, provided no foreign potentate shall depart this life within the time above mentioned" (*Steele*).

No. 57.—*Spectator had no greater love for*

the effeminate man than for the masculine woman. I am at this time acquainted with a young gentleman who has passed a great part of his life in the nursery, and upon occasion can make a candle or a sack-posset better than any man in England. He is likewise a wonderful critic in cambrics and muslins, and he will talk an hour together upon a sweetmeat. He entertains his mother every night with observations that he makes both in town and court: as what lady shows the nicest fancy in her dress, what man of quality wears the fairest wig, who has the finest linen, who the prettiest snuff-box, with many other like curious remarks that may be made in good company[1] (*Addison*).

No. 573 *gives a description of the "malade imaginaire." He was the fifth husband of a much-married woman, who gives her experience of matrimonial life in the following brief recapitulation:* My first insulted me, my second was nothing to me, my third disgusted me, the fourth would have ruined me, the fifth tormented me, and the sixth would have starved me. *Lord Friday, the "malade imaginaire," was her fifth partner, and is sketched as follows:* I proposed, from my rank and his estate, to live in all the joys of pride, but how was

[1] And see Addison's description of the "cot-quean" in No. 482.

I mistaken! He was neither extravagant, nor ill-natured, nor debauched. I suffered, however, more with him than with all my others. He was splenetic. I was forced to sit whole days hearkening to his imaginary ails. It was impossible to tell what would please him: what he liked when the sun shined, made him sick when it rained; he had no distemper, but lived in constant fear of them all. My good genius dictated to me to bring him acquainted with Dr. Gruel; from that day he was always contented, because he had names for all his complaints. The good doctor furnished him with reasons for all his pains, and prescriptions for every fancy that troubled him: in hot weather he lived upon juleps, and let blood to prevent fevers; when it grew cloudy he generally apprehended a consumption; to shorten the history of this wretched part of my life, he ruined a good constitution by endeavouring to mend it, and took several medicines, which ended in taking the grand remedy, which cured both him and me of all our uneasinesses.

Spectator had already dealt with the valetudinarian in a much earlier number (25), *of which the following is a portion:*

Sir, I am one of that sickly tribe who are commonly known by the name of valetudinarians,

and do confess to you that I first contracted this ill habit of body, or rather of mind, by the study of physic. I no sooner began to peruse books of this nature, but I found my pulse was irregular; and scarce ever read the account of any disease that I did not fancy myself afflicted with. Dr. Sydenham's learned treatise of fevers[1] threw me into a lingering hectic, which hung upon me all the while I was reading that excellent piece. I then applied myself to the study of several authors, who have written upon phthisical distempers, and by that means fell into a consumption, till at length, growing very fat, I was in a manner shamed out of that imagination. Not long after this I found in myself all the symptoms of the gout, except pain, but was cured of it by a treatise upon the gravel, written by a very ingenious author, who (as is usual for physicians to convert one distemper into another) eased me of the gout by giving me the stone. I at length studied myself into a complication of distempers, but accidentally taking into my hand that ingenious

[1] Thomas Sydenham, "The English Hippocrates," 1624-1689. A very famous physician and medical writer. The treatise here mentioned is *Methodus Curandi Febres*, published in 1666; a second edition, with an additional chapter on the Plague, in 1668. He was buried in the church of St. James's, Piccadilly, where a mural tablet was put up to his memory by the College of Physicians in 1810.

discourse written by Santorious,[1] I was resolved to direct myself by a scheme of rules which I had collected from his observations. The learned world are very well acquainted with that gentleman's invention, who, for the better carrying on of his experiments, contrived a certain mathematical chair, which was so artificially hung upon springs that it would weigh anything as well as a pair of scales. By this means he discovered how many ounces of his food passed by perspiration, what quantity of it was turned into nourishment, and how much went away by the other channels and distributions of nature. . . . And yet, Sir, notwithstanding this my great care to ballast myself equally every day, and to keep my body in its proper poise, so it is that I find myself in a sick and languishing condition (*Addison*).

In No. 10 *the editor commends the "Spectator" to what he calls the "blanks of society," as likely to give them something to think and talk about.* There is another set of men that I must likewise lay a claim to, whom I have lately called the blanks of society, as being altogether unfurnished with ideas until the business and conversation of the day has supplied them. I have often considered these poor souls with an eye of great

[1] Santorio, best known to fame by his work in helping to perfect the thermometer, which owes its invention to Galileo.

commiseration when I have heard them asking the first they have met with whether there was any news stirring, and by that means gathering together materials for thinking. These needy persons do not know what to talk of until about twelve o'clock in the morning, for by that time they are pretty good judges of the weather, know which way the wind sits, and whether the Dutch mail be come in. As they lie at the mercy of the first man they meet, and are grave or impertinent all the day long, according to the notions which they have imbibed in the morning, I would earnestly intreat them not to stir out of their chambers until they have read this paper, and do promise them that I will daily instil into them such sound and wholesome sentiments as shall have a good effect on their conversation for the ensuing twelve hours (*Addison*).

The tribe of "beaux esprits" is taken seriously in hand by Steele in No. 234. *His indictment takes the form of a letter from Philonous, and runs as follows:*

DEVONSHIRE,
November 14, 1711.

SIR,—There arrived in this neighbourhood two days ago one of your gay gentlemen of the town, who, being attended at his entry with a servant of his own, besides a countryman he had taken up

for a guide, excited the curiosity of the village to learn whence and what he might be. The countryman (to whom they applied as most easy of access) knew little more than that the gentleman came from London to travel and see fashions, and was, as he heard say, a free-thinker. What religion that might be he could not tell; and for his own part, if they had not told him the man was a free-thinker, he should have guessed, by his way of talking, he was little better than a heathen, excepting only that he had been a good gentleman to him, and made him drunk twice in one day, over and above what they had bargained for. . . .

There is no necessity that every 'squire in Great Britain should know what the word free-thinkers stands for; but it were much to be wished that they who value themselves upon that conceited title were a little better instructed in what it ought to stand for, and that they would not persuade themselves a man is really and truly a free-thinker, in any tolerable sense, merely by virtue of his being an atheist, or an infidel of any other distinction. It may be doubted with good reason whether there ever was in nature a more abject, slavish, and bigoted generation than the tribe of *beaux esprits* at present so prevailing in this island. Their pretension to be free-thinkers is no other than rakes have to be free-livers, and

savages to be freemen—that is, they can think whatever they have a mind to, and give themselves up to whatever conceit the extravagancy of their inclination or their fancy shall suggest; they can think as widely as they talk and act, and will not endure that their wit should be controlled by such formal things as decency and common sense (*Steele*).

No. 275.—*Addison, after attending an assembly of scientific and medical authorities, whose discussion was directed to the anatomy of the human body, tells us that his mind, being preoccupied with what he had been hearing, dreamed at night a remarkable dream.* I was invited, methought, to the dissection of a beau's head and a coquette's heart, which were both of them laid on a table before us. An imaginary operator opened the first with a great deal of nicety, which, upon a cursory and superficial view, appeared like the head of another man; but upon applying our glasses to it, we made a very odd discovery—namely, that what we looked upon as brains were not such in reality, but an heap of strange materials wound up in that shape and texture, and packed together with wonderful art in the several cavities of the skull. For, as Homer tells us, that the blood of the gods is not real blood, but only something like it; so we found that the brain of a beau is not real brain, but only something like it.

The pineal gland, which many of our modern philosophers suppose to be the seat of the soul, smelt very strong of essence and orange-flower water, and was encompassed with a kind of horny substance cut into a thousand little faces or mirrors, which were imperceptible to the naked eye, insomuch that the soul, if there had been any here, must have been always taken up in contemplating her own beauties.

We observed a large antrum or cavity in the sinciput that was filled with ribbons, lace, and embroidery, wrought together in a most curious piece of network, the parts of which were likewise imperceptible to the naked eye. Another of these antrums or cavities was stuffed with invisible billet-doux and love-letters, pricked dances, and other trumpery of the same nature. In another we found a kind of powder, which set the whole company a-sneezing, and by the scent discovered itself to be right Spanish. The several other cells were stored with commodities of the same kind, of which it would be tedious to give the reader an exact inventory.

There was a large cavity on each side of the head, which I must not omit. That on the right side was filled with fictions, flatteries, and falsehoods, vows, promises, and protestations; that on the left with oaths and imprecations.

There issued out a duct from each of these cells, which ran into the root of the tongue, where both joined together, and passed forward in one common duct to the tip of it. We discovered several little roads or canals running from the ear into the brain, and took particular care to trace them out through their several passages. One of them extended itself to a bundle of sonnets and little musical instruments. Others ended in several bladders, which were filled either with wind or froth. But the large canal entered into a great cavity of the skull, from whence there went another canal into the tongue. This great cavity was filled with a kind of spongy substance, which the French anatomists call galimatias[1] and the English nonsense.

The skins of the forehead were extremely tough and thick, and, what very much surprised us, had not in them any single bloodvessel that we were able to discover, either with or without our glasses, from whence we concluded that the party, when alive, must have been entirely deprived of the faculty of blushing.

The os cribriforme was exceedingly stuffed, and in some places damaged with snuff. We could not

[1] *Galimatias* (origin unknown; first found in sixteenth century) = confused language, meaningless talk (*Oxford Dictionary*).

but take notice in particular of that small muscle which is not often discovered in dissections, and draws the nose upwards when it expresses the contempt the owner of it has upon seeing anything he does not like or hearing anything he does not understand. I need not tell my learned reader this is that muscle which performs the motion so often mentioned by the Latin poet when they talk of a man's cocking his nose or playing the rhinoceros.

We did not find anything very remarkable in the eye, saving only that the musculi amatorii, or, as we may translate it into English, the ogling muscles, were very much worn and decayed with use, whereas, on the contrary, the elevator, or the muscle which turns the eye towards heaven, did not appear to have been used at all.

I have only mentioned in this dissection such new discoveries as we were able to make, and have not taken any notice of those parts which are to be met with in common heads. As for the skull, the face, and indeed the whole outward shape and figure of the head, we could not discover any difference from what we observe in the heads of other men. We were informed that the person to whom this head belonged had passed for a man above five-and-thirty years, during which time he ate and drank like other people,

dressed well, talked loud, laughed frequently, and on particular occasions had acquitted himself tolerably at a ball or an assembly, to which one of the company added that a certain knot of ladies took him for a wit. He was cut off in the flower of his age by the blow of a paring shovel,[1] having been surprised by an eminent citizen as he was tendering some civilities to his wife"[2] (*Addison*).

No. 47 (*April* 24, 1711).—*The practical joker was no favourite with Addison, and he insists that this species of wit should be confined to the first day of April.* This little triumph of the understanding, under the disguise of laughter, is nowhere more visible than in that custom which prevails everywhere among us on the first day of the present month, when everyone takes

[1] According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, a *paring shovel* is a spade with a sharp edge for cutting turf, etc.; but to *pare the street* appears to have been an ordinary expression for removing snow or refuse from before the door and house. See *Tatler*, No. 9.

> "The slipshod prentice, from his master's door,
> Had par'd the street, and sprinkled round the floor."

The shovel used for this purpose would naturally be kept near the front-door, and would thus be at hand for the employment of it described in the text.

[2] A companion picture to the dissection of a beau's head will be found in *The Inventory of the Beau* (*Tatler*, No. 113).

it in his head to make as many fools as he can. In proportion as there are more follies discovered, so there is more laughter raised on this day than on any other in the whole year. A neighbour of mine, who is a haberdasher by trade, and a very shallow, conceited fellow, makes his boast that for these ten years successively he has not made less than an hundred April fools. My landlady had a falling-out with him about a fortnight ago for sending every one of her children upon some sleeveless errand, as she terms it. Her eldest son went to buy an halfpenny worth of incle[1] at a shoemaker's; the eldest daughter was despatched half a mile to see a monster; and, in short, the whole family of innocent children made April fools. Nay, my landlady herself did not escape him. This empty fellow has laughed upon these conceits ever since. This art of wit is well enough when confined to one day in a twelvemonth, but there is an ingenious tribe of men sprung up of late years who are for making April fools every day in the year. These gentlemen are commonly distinguished by the name of biters,[2] a race of men that are perpetually employed in

[1] Inkle, a coarse kind of tape.

[2] The *Oxford Dictionary* defines *biter* as a deceiver, one who amuses himself at another's expense; obsolete except in the expression "biter bit." *Bite* was formerly a slang term for a hoax; in modern slang, a *sell*.

laughing at those mistakes which are of their own production (*Addison*).

We learn more about the biters in one of Steele's essays—namely, No. 504. A biter is one who tells you a thing you have no reason to disbelieve in itself, and perhaps has given you, before he bit you, no reason to disbelieve it for his saying it; and if you give him credit, laughs in your face and triumphs that he has deceived you. In a word, a biter is one who thinks you a fool because you do not think him a knave.

This way of wit is called biting, by a metaphor taken from beasts of prey, which devour harmless and unarmed animals, and look upon them as their food wherever they meet them. . . . They carry this to all the extravagance imaginable. . . . I remember a remarkable instance of this kind. There came up a shrewd young fellow to a plain young man, his countryman, and taking him aside with a grave, concerned countenance, goes on at this rate: "I see you here, and have you heard nothing out of Yorkshire? You look so surprised you could not have heard of it, and yet the particulars are such that it cannot be false. I am sorry I am got into it so far that I now must tell you; but I know not but it may be for your service to know. On Tuesday last, just after dinner—you know his manner is

to smoke—opening his box, your father fell down dead in an apoplexy." The youth showed the filial sorrow which he ought, upon which the witty man cried, "Bite, there is nothing in all this."

Steele proceeds to describe a still more extravagant, indeed gruesome, instance of the "bite." It is a superstition with some surgeons who beg the bodies of condemned malefactors to go to the gaol and bargain for the carcase with the criminal himself.[1] A good honest fellow did so last sessions, and was admitted to the condemned men on the morning wherein they died. The surgeon communicated his business, and fell into discourse with a little fellow, who refused twelve shillings, and insisted upon fifteen for his body. The fellow who killed the officer of Newgate, very forwardly, and like a man who was willing to deal, told him, "Look you, Mr. Surgeon, that little dry fellow, who has been half starved all his life, and is now half dead with fear, cannot answer your purpose. I have ever lived highly and freely, my veins are full, I have not pined in imprisonment; you see, my crest swells to your knife, and after Jack Catch[2] has done, upon my

[1] Is this practice confirmed by other writers?

[2] John Ketch, often spelt Catch, hangman and public executioner from soon after the Restoration until his death in

honour you will find me as sound as ever a bullock in any of the markets. Come, for twenty shillings I am your man." Says the surgeon, "Done; there is a guinea." This witty rogue took the money, and as soon as he had it in his fist cries, "Bite, I am to be hung in chains" (*Steele*).

No. 93.—*In conclusion, we will listen to Spectator's advice to those who would leave behind them the record of a well and sensibly spent life.* If we divide the life of most men into twenty parts, we shall find that at least nineteen of them are mere gaps and chasms which are neither filled with pleasure nor business. I do not, however, include in this calculation the life of those men who are in a perpetual hurry of affairs, but of those only who are not always engaged in scenes of action; and I hope I shall not do an unacceptable piece of service to these persons if I point out to them certain methods for filling up of their empty spaces of life. The methods I shall propose to them are as follows:

The first is the exercise of virtue in the most general acceptation of the word. That particular

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1686. His name as Jack Ketch became a synonym for the public executioner, chiefly known to his contemporaries for the bungling way in which he beheaded Lord Russell in 1683 and the Duke of Monmouth in 1685.

scheme which comprehends the social virtues may give employment to the most industrious temper, and find a man in business more than the most active station of life. To advise the ignorant, relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted, are duties that fall in our way almost every day of our lives. A man has frequent opportunities of mitigating the fierceness of a party, of doing justice to the character of a deserving man, of softening the envious, quieting the angry, and rectifying the prejudiced, which are all of them employments suited to a reasonable nature, and bring great satisfaction to the person who can busy himself in them with discretion.

In the second place, Spectator exhorts to communion with the great Author of our being. The man who lives under an habitual sense of the divine presence keeps up a perpetual cheerfulness of temper, and enjoys every moment the satisfaction of thinking himself in company with his dearest and best of friends. The time never lies heavy upon him; it is impossible for him to be alone.

In the third place, innocent diversions are commended; but waste of time over cards is severely condemned. A purified stage is much to be desired from this point of view. The stage might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and

useful entertainments were it under proper regulations.

The most brilliant conversationalist of his day was not likely to omit from his list of diversions the companionship of "a well-chosen friend." In the fourth place, therefore, he commends the enjoyment of comradeship. There is, indeed, no blessing of life that is in any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. . . . Next to such an intimacy with a particular person, one would endeavour after a more general conversation with such as are able to entertain and improve those with whom they converse, which are qualifications that seldom go asunder.

Fifthly, the various accomplishments and tastes are not forgotten; music, art, architecture, painting, have their place in the diversions of life. So with good sense and edification the florist, the planter, the gardener may indulge their hobbies.

Last, but not least, as might be expected in a man of such varied knowledge, comes the praise of books. But of all the diversions of life, there is none so proper to fill up its empty spaces as the reading of useful and entertaining authors (*Addison*).

CHAPTER IV

THE "SPECTATOR" ON WOMEN

SPECTATOR *has much to say to the women of his day, especially, as may be supposed, to the women of fashion. And, indeed, there was much that wanted saying. The condition of woman after the Restoration was one of great humiliation. Her dignity was ignored where it was not denied. In the fashionable literature of the Stuart period female modesty and virtue were subjects of ridicule; women were trained to think of themselves, not only as living in a different sphere, but as on a different level from men. Treated as they were by the other sex, they could, with exceptions, hardly take themselves seriously. When Spectator came to deal with the woman of society, he found his hands very full; full, too, of a subject that readily lent itself to his singular powers of satire.*

Thackeray had no ground for saying of Addison that he "rather laughs at women than treats them seriously,"[1] *contrasting him in this respect with*

[1] *English Humorists*, p. 141; so also, to some extent, Dennis, *The Age of Pope*, p. 15 *f.*

Steele. It is undeniably true that he does laugh at woman, but when we come to read what, in the life of woman, he laughs at, we shall find ample justification for the ridicule; and we shall probably agree with Addison in thinking that they were more likely to be laughed than scolded out of their vanities. Mr. Courthope is more fair to the memory of Addison, and far nearer the truth, when he says, "Nothing in the work of Addison is more suggestive of the just and well-balanced character of his genius than his papers on women."[1]

In the closing years of the reign of Louis XIV., in which so much blood and treasure had been sacrificed on the altar of French ambition, it is no wonder that we come across in the English literature of that period

[1] *Life of Addison*, p. 170. "Woman as the companion and helpmate of man . . . was the creation of the *Spectator*" (p. 171, and *cf.* p. 13). The verdict of Addison's contemporaries and immediate successors is thus expressed:

> "And, what no mortal could devise,
> Women, by reading thee, grow wise.
>
> * * * * *
>
> The ladies, pleas'd with thee to dwell,
> Aspire to write correct, and spell."

The entire poem may be read in *Nichols's Select Collection*, p. 394. If Addison can be justly charged with undue severity and cynicism in his treatment of "the fair sex," the accusation would find support in his contributions to the *Guardian* rather than in the part that he took in the *Spectator*.

expressions of disfavour towards our neighbours across the water. Addison shared this prejudice to the full, and he speaks with indignation of the influx of French sentiments and fashions. Listen to him as he describes the fashionable ladies of his own day (*No.* 45). *Heading his essay with the words Natio comoda est* (*Juv. Sat., iii., ver.* 100), *he proceeds:* There is nothing which I desire more than a safe and honourable peace,[1] though at the same time I am very apprehensive of many ill consequences that may attend it. I do not mean in regard to our politics, but to our manners. What an inundation of ribbons and brocades will break in upon us! what peals of laughter and impertinence shall we be exposed to! For the prevention of these great evils, I could heartily wish that there was an Act of Parliament for prohibiting the importation of French fopperies.

The female inhabitants of our island have already received very strong impressions from this ludicrous nation,[2] though by the length of

[1] No. 45 was published April 21, 1711. The peace conferences opened at Utrecht on January 29, 1712.

[2] Addison did not learn to love or respect the French nation during his residence in the country of a year and a half. His references to France and its inhabitants are invariably the reverse of flattering, except as regards taste in dress. Mr. Courthope remarks that "it is amusing to find Addison making his Tory fox-hunter declare this anti-Gallican temper to be the

the war (as there is no evil which has not some good attending it) they are pretty well worn out and forgotten. . . .

Sempronia is at present the most profest admirer of the French nation, but is so modest as to admit her visitants no farther than her toilet.[1] It is a very odd sight that beautiful creature makes when she is talking politics with her tresses flowing about her shoulders, and examining that face in the glass which does such execution upon all the male standers-by. How prettily does she divide her discourse between her woman and her visitants! What sprightly transitions does she make from an opera or sermon to an ivory comb or a pin-cushion! How have I been pleased to see her interrupted in an account of her travels by a message to her footman, and holding her tongue in the midst of a moral reflection by applying the tip of it to a patch!

There is nothing which exposes a woman to greater dangers than that gaiety and airiness of

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main fruits of foreign travel." He adds: "On some of the stronger and more enthusiastic minds the chief effect of the grand tour was to produce a violent hatred of all foreign manners." In his pamphlet on *The Present State of War*, written in 1707, Addison finds and uses full scope for expressing his rooted aversion to the French. See also No. 30, *Freeholder*.

[1] An allusion to the bedside visits of French society referred to in this essay. See below.

temper which are natural to most of the sex. It should, therefore, be the concern of every wise and virtuous woman to keep this sprightliness from degenerating into levity. On the contrary, the whole discourse and behaviour of the French is to make the sex more fantastical, or (as they are pleased to term it) more awakened, than is consistent either with virtue or discretion. To speak loud in public assemblies, to let everyone hear you talk of things that should only be mentioned in private or in whispers, are looked upon as parts of a refined education. At the same time a blush is unfashionable, and silence more ill-bred than anything that can be spoken. In short, discretion and modesty, which in all other ages and countries have been regarded as the greatest ornaments of the fair sex, are considered as the ingredients of narrow conversation and family behaviour.

In the same paper the writer animadverts most severely upon the fashion of ladies "receiving visits in their beds." The practice came from France, but apparently had been discontinued when the "Spectator" was written. Addison, however, could remember the time when "it was looked upon as a piece of ill-breeding for a woman to refuse to see a man because she was not stirring, and a porter would have been thought unfit for his place

that could have made so awkward an excuse"[1] (*Addison*).

In No. 10 *Spectator makes a special appeal to the ladies in view of the trivialities which for the most part occupy their time.* There are none to whom this paper will be more useful than to the female world. I have often thought there has not been sufficient pains taken in finding out proper employments and diversions for the fair ones. Their amusements seem contrived for them rather as they are women than as they are reasonable creatures, and are more adapted to the sex than to the species. The toilet is their great scene of business, and the right adjusting of their hair the principal employment of their lives. The sorting of a suit of ribbands is reckoned a very good morning's work, and if they make an excursion to a mercer's or a toy-shop, so great a fatigue makes them unfit for anything else all the day after. Their more serious occupations are sewing and embroidery, and their greatest drudgery the preparations of jellies and sweetmeats. This, I say, is the state of ordinary women, though I know there are multitudes of a more elevated life

[1] The custom was copied from the French *précieuses* at a time when *courir les ruelles* (to take the run of the bedsides) was a Parisian phrase for fashionable morning calls upon the ladies. The *ruelle* is the little path between the bedside and the wall.

and conversation that move in an exalted sphere of knowledge and virtue, that join all the beauties of the mind to the ornaments of dress, and inspire a kind of awe and respect, as well as love, into their male beholders (*Addison*).

In No. 15 *Addison moralises upon the attraction that outward show has for the female temperament.* When I was in France, I used to gaze with great astonishment at the splendid equipages and party-coloured habits of that fantastic nation. I was one day in particular contemplating a lady that sat in a coach adorned with gilded Cupids, and finely painted with the loves of Venus and Adonis. The coach was drawn by six milk-white horses, and loaded behind with the same number of powdered footmen. Just before the lady were a couple of beautiful pages that were stuck among the harness, and by their gay dresses and smiling features looked like the elder brothers of the little boys that were carved and painted in every corner of the coach.

The lady was the unfortunate Cleanthe, who afterwards gave an occasion to a pretty melancholy novel. She had for several years received the addresses of a gentleman, whom after a long and intimate acquaintance she forsook, upon the account of this shining equipage, which had been offered to her by one of great riches but a

crazy constitution. The circumstances in which I saw her were, it seems, the disguises only of a broken heart, and a kind of pageantry to cover distress; for in two months after she was carried to her grave with the same pomp and magnificence, being sent there partly by the loss of one lover and partly by the possession of another.

I have often reflected with myself on this unaccountable humour in womankind of being smitten with everything that is showy and superficial, and on the numberless evils that befall the sex from this light fantastical disposition. I myself remember a young lady that was very warmly solicited by a couple of importunate rivals, who, for several months together, did all they could to recommend themselves by complacency of behaviour and agreeableness of conversation. At length, when the competition was doubtful and the lady undetermined in her choice, one of the young lovers very luckily bethought himself of adding a supernumerary lace to his liveries, which had so good an effect that he married her the very week after.

The usual conversation of ordinary women very much cherishes this natural weakness of being taken with outside and appearance. Talk of a new-married couple, and you immediately hear whether they keep their coach and six or eat in

plate. Mention the name of an absent lady, and it is ten to one but you learn something of her gown and petticoat. A ball is a great help to discourse, and a birthday furnishes conversation for a twelvemonth after. A furbelow[1] of precious stones, a hat buttoned with a diamond, a brocade waistcoat or petticoat, are standing topics. In short, they consider only the drapery of the species, and never cast away a thought on those ornaments of the mind that make persons illustrious in themselves and useful to others. When women are thus perpetually dazzling one another's imaginations and filling their heads with nothing but colours, it is no wonder that they are more attentive to the superficial parts of life than the solid and substantial blessings of it. A girl who has been trained up in this kind of conversation is in danger of every embroidered coat that comes in her way. A pair of fringed gloves may be her ruin. In a word, lace and ribbands, silver and gold galloons,[2] with the like glittering gewgaws, are so many lures to women

[1] Furbelow, what would now be called a flounce; furbelow is an alteration from falbala, otherwise written falbeloe and fall-bullow. The word came into use in the seventeenth century. Derivation unknown.

[2] *Galloon*, a kind of narrow, close-woven ribbon or braid of gold or silver or silk thread for trimming articles of apparel. Origin uncertain; a word still in use in parts of the country.

of weak minds and low education, and, when artificially displayed, are able to fetch down the most airy coquette from the wildest of her flights and rambles.

True happiness is of a retired nature, and an enemy to pomp and noise; it arises, in the first place, from the enjoyment of oneself, and, in the next, from the friendship and conversation of a few select companions; it loves shade and solitude, and naturally haunts groves and fountains, fields and meadows; in short, it feels everything it wants within itself, and receives no addition from multitudes of witnesses and spectators. On the contrary, false happiness loves to be in a crowd, and to draw the eyes of the world upon her. She does not receive any satisfaction from the applauses which she gives herself, but from the admiration which she raises in others. She flourishes in courts and palaces, theatres and assemblies, and has no existence but when she is looked upon.

Aurelia, though a woman of great quality, delights in the privacy of a country life, and passes away a great part of her time in her own walks and gardens. Her husband, who is her bosom friend and companion in her solitudes, has been in love with her ever since he knew her. They both abound with good sense, consummate

virtue, and a mutual esteem, and are a perpetual entertainment to one another. Their family is under so regular an economy in its hours of devotion and repast, employment and diversion, that it looks like a little commonwealth within itself. They often go into company that they may return with the greater delight to one another, and sometimes live in town, not to enjoy it so properly, as to grow weary of it, that they may renew in themselves the relish of a country life. By this means they are happy in each other, beloved by their children, adored by their servants, and are become the envy, or rather the delight, of all that know them.

How different to this is the life of Fulvia! She considers her husband as her steward, and looks upon discretion and good housewifery as little domestic virtues unbecoming a woman of quality. She thinks life lost in her own family, and fancies herself out of the world when she is not in the ring,[1] the playhouse, or the drawing-room. She lives in a perpetual motion of body

[1] The Ring in Hyde Park is frequently mentioned in seventeenth and eighteenth century literature. Here was situated the noted Hyde Park duelling-ground. See Wheatley and Cunningham, *England's Past and Present*, vol. iii., p. 163. There is further mention of the Ring in No. 88 of the *Spectator:* "The next place of resort, wherein the servile world are let loose, is at the entrance of Hyde Park, while the gentry are at the Ring."

and restlessness of thought, and is never easy in any one place when she thinks there is more company in another. The missing of an opera the first night would be more afflicting to her than the death of a child. She pities all the valuable part of her own sex, and calls every woman of a prudent, modest, and retired life a poor-spirited, unpolished creature. What a mortification would it be to Fulvia if she knew that her setting herself to view is but exposing herself, and that she grows contemptible by being conspicuous! (*Addison*).

No. 323 contains a letter from an imaginary correspondent who describes herself as a maiden lady of good fortune, by name Clarinda, and encloses a five days' diary kept at the suggestion and for the edification of Spectator. The following is a sample, being the diary for Wednesday:

Wednesday.—From eight to ten: drank two dishes of chocolate in bed, and fell asleep after them. From ten to eleven: eat a slice of bread and butter, drank a dish of bohea, read the *Spectator*. From eleven to one: at my toilette; tried a new head. Gave orders for Veny to be combed and washed. (Mem.: I look best in blue.) From one till half an hour after two: drove to the 'Change. Cheapened[1] a couple of fans. Till

[1] *Cheapen*, to bargain for.

four: at dinner. (Mem.: Mr. Froth passed by in his new liveries.) From four to six: dressed, paid a visit to old Lady Blithe and her sister, having before heard they were gone out of town that day. From six to eleven: at basset.[1] (Mem.: never set again upon the ace of diamonds.)

Commenting on the diary, Spectator begs Clarinda to "consider what a pretty figure she would make among posterity, were the history of her whole life published like these five days of it," (Addison).

No. 81.—*Ladies' patches, which came in with the Stuarts,*[2] *but did not go out with them, could not escape the satire of the "Spectator." It may be that Addison's wit shortened the reign of this folly, which did not long survive the reign of Queen*

[1] *Basset*, an old Venetian game of cards, resembling faro, very popular in the eighteenth century.

[2] According to Isaac D'Israeli, the patch was invented *temp.* Edward VI. by a foreign lady with the view of concealing a wen in her neck (*Curiosities of Literature*, Routledge's Edition, p. 81). The earliest notice of the adoption of the practice in England is in Bulwer's *Artificial Changeling*, 1653. It was severely denounced by the Puritan; but, in spite of Puritan conscience and Spectator's ridicule, it held its own, and was general and fashionable throughout the greater part of the eighteenth century. Frequent reference was made to the practice by the moralists of the age. Patching and painting are constant objects of disapproval and scorn in Law's *Serious Call* (1728).

Anne. About the middle of last winter I went to see an opera at the theatre in the Haymarket, where I could not but take notice of two parties of very fine women that had placed themselves in the opposite side boxes, and seemed drawn up in a kind of battle array one against another. After a short survey of them, I found they were patched differently, the faces on one hand being spotted on the right side of the forehead, and those upon the other on the left. I quickly perceived that they cast hostile glances upon one another, and that their patches were placed in those different situations as party signals to distinguish friends from foes. In the middle boxes, between these two opposite bodies, were several ladies who patched indifferently on both sides of their faces, and seemed to sit there with no other intention but to see the opera. Upon enquiry I found that the body of Amazons on my right hand were Whigs, and those on my left Tories,[1] and that those who had placed themselves in the middle boxes were a neutral party, whose faces had not yet declared themselves. These last, however, as I afterwards found, diminished daily, and took their party with one side or the other, insomuch that I observed in several of them the patches which

[1] Steele, in the *Tatler*, remarks that you could not come among women but you find them divided into Whig and Tory.

were before dispersed equally are now all gone over to the Whig or Tory side of the face. The censorious say that the men, whose hearts are aimed at, are very often the occasions that one part of the face is thus dishonoured, and lies under a kind of disgrace, while the other is so much set off and adorned by the owner, and that patches turn to the right or to the left according to the principles of the man who is most in favour. But whatever may be the motives of a few fantastical coquettes, who do not patch for the public good so much as for their own private advantage, it is certain that there are several women of honour who patch out of principle, and with an eye to the interest of their country. Nay, I am informed that some of them adhere so steadfastly to their party, and are so far from sacrificing their zeal for the public to their passion for any particular person, that in a late draught of marriage articles a lady has stipulated with her husband that, whatever his opinions are, she shall be at liberty to patch on which side she pleases.

I must here take notice that Rosalinda, a famous Whig partisan, has most unfortunately a very beautiful mole on the Tory part of her forehead, which, being very conspicuous, has occasioned many mistakes, and given a handle to her enemies to misrepresent her face, as if it had

revolted from the Whig interest. But, whatever this natural patch may seem to intimate, it is well known that her notions of government are still the same. This unlucky mole, however, has misled several coxcombs; and like the hanging out of false colours, made some of them converse with Rosalinda in what they thought the spirit of her party, when on a sudden she has given them an unexpected fire, and has sunk them all at once. If Rosalinda is unfortunate in her mole, Nigranilla is as unhappy in a pimple, which forces her against her inclinations to patch on the Whig side (*Addison*).

No. 57.—*The Amazon of the countryside is a yet greater offence to good taste.* I have very frequently the opportunity of seeing a rural Andromache, who came up to town last winter, and is one of the greatest fox-hunters in the country. She talks of hounds and horses, and makes nothing of leaping over a six-barred gate. If a man tells her a waggish story, she gives him a push with her hand in jest, and calls him an impudent dog; and if her servant neglects his business, threatens to kick him out of the house. I have heard her in her wrath call a substantial tradesman a lousy cur, and remember one day, when she could not think of the name of a person, she described him, in a large company of men and

ladies, by the fellow with the broad shoulders (*Addison*).

No. 265.—*The head-dress of Addison's time, and for long after his day, was a matter of vast importance to the female mind. Known as the "commode,"*[1] *it demanded much time and attention on the part of ladies of fashion. In more than one paper it is the object of Addison's satire. It must be confessed that the "commode" long survived the attacks of the "Spectator," reaching its zenith quite late in the century.* One of the fathers, if I am rightly informed, has defined a woman to be ζῷον φιλόκοσμον, an animal that delights in finery. I have already treated of the sex in two or three papers, conformably to this definition; and have in particular observed that in all ages they have been more careful than the men to adorn that part of the head which we generally call the outside.

This observation is so very notorious that when in ordinary discourse we say a man has a fine head, a long head, or a good head, we express ourselves metaphorically, and speak in relation to his understanding; whereas, when we say of a

[1] *Commode*, called by the French *fontange*, a structure of wire which bore up the hair and the fore part of the lace cap to a great height. The commode had no fastening; hence the name, as lending itself to convenience.

woman she has a fine, a long, or a good head, we speak only in relation to her commode.

It is observed among birds that nature has lavished all her ornaments upon the male, who very often appears in a most beautiful head-dress, whether it be a crest, a comb, a tuft of feathers, or a natural little plume erected like a kind of pinnacle on the very top of the head. As nature, on the contrary, has poured out her charms in the greatest abundance upon the female part of our species, so they are very assiduous in bestowing upon themselves the finest garnitures of art. The peacock, in all his pride, does not display half the colours that appear in the garments of a British lady when she is dressed either for a ball or a birthday.

But to return to our female heads. The ladies have been for some time in a kind of moulting season with regard to that part of their dress, having cast great quantities of ribbon, lace, and cambric, and in some measure reduced that part of the human figure to the beautiful globular form which is natural to it. We have for a great while expected what kind of ornament would be substituted in the place of those antiquated commodes. But our female projectors were all the last summer so much taken up with the improvement of their petticoats that they had

not time to attend to anything else; but having at length sufficiently adorned their lower parts, they now begin to turn their thoughts upon the other extremity, as well remembering the old kitchen proverb that "if you light your candle at both ends, the middle will shift for itself."

I am engaged in this speculation by a sight which I lately met with at the opera. As I was standing in the hinder part of a box, I took notice of a little cluster of women sitting together in the prettiest coloured hoods that I ever saw. One of them was blue, another yellow, and another philomot;[1] the fourth was of a pink colour, and the fifth of a pale green. I looked with as much pleasure upon this little party-coloured assembly as upon a bed of tulips,[2] and did not know at first whether it might not be an embassy of Indian queens; but upon my going about into the pit, and taking them in front, I was immediately undeceived, and saw so much beauty in every face that I found them all to be English.

[1] More correctly filemot, from French *feuillemorte*, signifying "the colour of dead leaves."

[2] The "tulipomania" belonged rather to the seventeenth than to the eighteenth century, but even in the time of the *Spectator* the tulip was the object of much enthusiasm. See the entertaining paper by Addison on his visit to a garden in the *Tatler* (No. 218).

Such eyes and lips, cheeks and foreheads, could be the growth of no other country. The complexion of their faces hindered me from observing anything further in the colour of their hoods, though I could easily perceive, by that unspeakable satisfaction which appeared in their looks, that their own thoughts were wholly taken up on those pretty ornaments they wore upon their heads.

I am informed that this fashion spreads daily, insomuch that the Whig and Tory ladies begin already to hang out different colours, and to show their principles in their head-dress. Nay, if I may believe my friend Will Honeycomb, there is a certain old coquette of his acquaintance who intends to appear very suddenly in a rainbow hood, like the Iris in Dryden's *Virgil*, not questioning but that among such a variety of colours she shall have a charm for every heart.

As I have nothing more at heart than the honour and improvement of the fair sex, I cannot conclude this paper without an exhortation to the British ladies that they would excel the women of all other nations as much in virtue and good sense as they do in beauty, which they may certainly do if they will be as industrious to cultivate their minds as they are to adorn their bodies (*Addison*).

Steele follows up his friend's good-natured reflections on the subject of hoods, or commodes, by publishing in No. 276 a letter from Hezekiah Broadbrim to this effect:

To the Man called the Spectator.

Friend,—Forasmuch as at the birth of thy labour thou didst promise upon thy word that, letting alone the vanities that do abound, thou wouldst only endeavour to straighten the crooked morals of this our Babylon, I gave credit to thy fair speeches, and admitted one of thy papers every day, save Sunday, into my house, for the edification of my daughter Tabitha, and to the end that Susanna, the wife of my bosom, might profit thereby. But, alas! my friend, I find that thou art a liar, and that the truth is not in thee; else, why didst thou, in a paper which thou didst lately put forth, make mention of those vain coverings for the heads of our females, which thou lovest to liken unto tulips, and which are lately sprung up among us? Nay, why didst thou make mention of them in such a seeming as if thou didst approve the invention, insomuch that my daughter Tabitha beginneth to wax wanton, and to lust after these foolish vanities? Surely thou dost see with the eyes of the flesh. Verily, therefore, unless thou dost speedily amend and leave off

following thine own imaginations, I will leave off thee. Thy friend as hereafter thou dost demean thyself, HEZEKIAH BROADBRIM (*Steele*).

No. 277.—*Spectator never professed any partiality for the French people—quite the reverse; but he is forced to admit that the fashionable world of England does not attempt to dispute the superiority of French taste in matters of dress.* I presume I need not inform the polite part of my readers that before our correspondence with France was unhappily interrupted by the war,[1] our ladies had all their fashions from thence, which the milliners took care to furnish them with by means of a jointed baby that came regularly over once a month, habited after the manner of the most eminent toasts in Paris.

I am credibly informed that even in the hottest time of the war the sex made several efforts and raised large contributions towards the importation of this wooden mademoiselle.

Teraminta expresses the view of her own class. I have long bewailed in secret the calamities of my sex during the war, in all which time we have laboured under the insupportable inventions of English tire-women, who, though they sometimes copy indifferently

[1] The war that ended with the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 had lasted eleven years.

well, can never compose with that *goût* they do in France.

I was almost in despair of ever more seeing a model from that dear country, when last Sunday I overheard a lady in the next pew to me whisper another that at the Seven Stars in King Street, Covent Garden, there was a mademoiselle completely dressed just come from Paris. . . .

You cannot imagine, worthy Sir, how ridiculously I find we have all been trussed up during the war, and how infinitely the French dress excels ours.

A letter almost immediately follows from a mantua maker announcing the arrival of "a French baby for 1712," *and inviting Spectator to an inspection.*[1] *The invitation was accepted.* As I was taking my leave, says the *Spectator*, the milliner further informed me that with the assistance of a watchmaker who was her neighbour, and the

[1] In the private accounts of Isabella, Duchess of Grafton, who married as her second husband, Sir Thomas Hanmer, we find the following item: "For a Baby, £2. 3. 0." The accounts cover the period between 1708 and 1723. The editor has put a note of interrogation after the word baby. Spectator makes the meaning clear. See correspondence of *Sir Thomas Hanmer with Memoir*, p. 236. Lady Thomas Hanmer was the widow of the first Duke of Grafton, who fell at the storming of Cork in 1690. Another mention of the "jointed baby" as a craze in the world of fashion will be found in No. 158 of the *Guardian*.

ingenious Mr. Powel,[1] she had also contrived another puppet, which by the help of several little springs to be wound up within it could move all its limbs, and that she had sent it over to her correspondent in Paris to be taught the various leanings and bendings of the head, the risings of the bosom, the curtsey and recovery, the genteel trip, and the agreeable jet,[2] as they are all now practised at the court of France (*Budgell*).

In No. 41 *Steele speaks his mind to ladies who paint.*[3] *The subject is introduced to his readers*

[1] Martin Powell, a deformed cripple, who grew rich by exhibiting a puppet show, the puppets being jointed dolls. Powell set up his exhibition under the piazza in Covent Garden. An amusing account of Powell and his productions is given in No. 14 of the *Spectator* by Steele, which testifies to the great popularity of the performance. References to Powell are frequent in contemporary literature. The puppet show is first noticed by Steele in No. 16 of the *Tatler*. Powell's marionettes represented a very high degree of mechanism and art. The modern Punch and Judy showman can trace his connection with Martin Powell.

[2] *Jet*, to move jauntily, to trip it, caper. This is but one of many meanings. See *Oxford Dictionary*.

[3] There is evidence that English women used paint as early as the fourteenth century. During the Commonwealth painting was under a ban, and few respectable women dared to adopt the practice; but it revived in Charles II.'s court at the Restoration. It is somewhat singular to read in *Evelyn's Diary*, May 11, 1653 (when the Puritans were almost at the height of

in a letter from an imaginary correspondent, who claims the right to divorce because he found that he had by a mistake, for which he was not responsible, married a woman he had never seen. For you are to know, Mr. Spectator, that there are women who do not let their husbands see their faces till they are married.[1]

Not to keep you in suspense, I mean plainly that part of the sex who paint. They are some of them so exquisitely skilful this way that, give them but a tolerable pair of eyes to set up with, and they will make bosom, lips, cheeks, and eyebrows by their own industry. As for my dear, never man was so enamoured as I was of her fair forehead, neck, and arms, as well as the bright jet of her hair; but to my great astonishment I find they were all the effect of art. . . . I shall take the liberty to part with her by the first opportunity, unless her father will make her portion suitable to her real, not her assumed, countenance.

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their power): "I now observed how the women began to paint themselves, formerly a most ignominious thing and used only by prostitutes." There is abundant evidence that the last part of this statement was not well grounded.

[1] Steele's imaginary correspondent might have quoted the words of Hamlet: "God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another."

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The following is part of Spectator's comment:

I cannot tell what the law or the parents of the lady will do for this injured gentleman, but must allow he has very much justice on his side. I have, indeed, very long observed this evil, and distinguished those of our women who wear their own, from those in borrowed complexions, by the Picts and the British. There does not need any great discernment to judge which are which. The British have a lively animated aspect, the Picts, though never so beautiful, have dead uninformed countenances. The muscles of a real face swell with soft passion, sudden surprise, and are flushed with agreeable confusions, according as the objects before them, or the ideas presented to them, affect their imagination. But the Picts behold all things with the same air, whether they are joyful or sad; the same fixed insensibility appears upon all occasions. A Pict, though she takes all that pains to invite the approach of lovers, is obliged to keep them at a certain distance: a sigh in a languishing lover, if fetched too near her, would dissolve a feature; and a kiss snatched by a forward one might transfer the complexion of the mistress to the admirer. It is hard to speak of these false fair ones without saying something uncomplaisant, but I would only recommend to them to consider how they

like coming into a room new painted; they may assure themselves the near approach of a lady who uses this practice is much more offensive (*Steele*).

In No. 334 *Spectator, after cordially expressing his approval of the art and exercise of dancing, appends a letter in which his correspondent deplores the debasement of this accomplishment that he is called upon to witness. This he attributes to the lack of encouragement that the dancer obtains from the pen of public writers.* The low ebb to which dancing is now fallen is altogether owing to this silence. The art is esteemed only as an amusing trifle; it lies altogether uncultivated, and is unhappily fallen under the imputation of illiterate and mechanic. And as Terence, in one of his prologues, complains of the rope-dancers drawing all the spectators from his play, so may we well say that capering and tumbling is now preferred to, and supplies the place of, just and regular dancing on our theatres[1] (*Steele*).

No. 247.—*Addison heads a paper* (*No.* 247) *with the translation of a line from Hesiod: "Their untired lips a wordy torrent pour." There is perhaps a good deal more irony than compliment in the essay,*

[1] No. 334 is by Steele, but the extract given above is from a correspondent, probably Mr. John Weaver, who published *An Essay towards a History of Dancing* (12mo, 1712). Other references to dancing will be found in Nos. 66, 370, 376, 466.

but the extraordinary power of the female tongue is freely admitted. We are told by some ancient authors that Socrates was instructed in eloquence by a woman, whose name, if I am not mistaken, was Aspasia. I have, indeed, very often looked upon that art as the most proper for the female sex, and I think the Universities would do well to consider whether they should not fill the rhetoric chairs with she-professors.

It has been said in the praise of some men that they could talk whole hours together upon anything; but it must be owned to the honour of the other sex that there are many among them who can talk whole hours together upon nothing. I have known a woman branch out into a long extempore dissertation upon the edging of a petticoat, and chide her servant for breaking a china cup in all the figures of rhetoric.

Were women admitted to plead in courts of judicature, I am persuaded they would carry the eloquence of the bar to greater heights than it has yet arrived at. If anyone doubts this, let him but be present at those debates which frequently arise among the ladies of the British fishery.[1]

[1] Billingsgate Market (*Aitken*). One cannot miss the allusion to the frequent violence of forensic language. *Cf.* No. 451 on the political pamphleteer: "Our satire is nothing but ribaldry

The first kind, therefore, of female orators which I shall take notice of are those who are employed in stirring up the passions, a part of rhetoric in which Socrates's wife had perhaps made a greater proficiency than his above-mentioned teacher.

The second kind of female orators are those who deal in invectives, and who are commonly known by the name of the censorious. The imagination and elocution of this set of rhetoricians is wonderful. With what a fluency of invention and copiousness of expression will they enlarge upon every slip in the behaviour of another! With how many different circumstances and with what variety of phrases will they tell over the same story! I have known an old lady make an unhappy marriage the subject of a month's conversation. She blamed the bride in one place, pitied her in another, laughed at her in a third, wondered at her in a fourth, was angry with her in a fifth, and, in short, wore out a pair of coach-horses in expressing her concern for her. . . .

A third kind of female orators may be comprehended under the word gossips. Mrs. Fiddle-

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and Billingsgate." See also *Tatler*, No. 79. In No. 38 of the *Freeholder*, Addison makes a final appeal to the fair sex not to unsex themselves. Here the scolding women of Homer's poetry are designated "Billingsgate warriors."

Faddle is perfectly accomplished in this sort of eloquence; she launches out into descriptions of christenings, runs divisions upon a head-dress, knows every dish of meat that is served up in her neighbourhood, and entertains her company a whole afternoon together with the wit of her little boy before he is able to speak.

The coquette may be looked upon as a fourth kind of female orator. To give herself the larger field for discourse, she hates and loves in the same breath, talks to her lap-dog or parrot, is uneasy in all kinds of weather and in every part of the room. She has false quarrels and feigned obligations to all the men of her acquaintance, sighs when she is not sad, and laughs when she is not merry. The coquette is, in particular, a great mistress of that part of oratory which is called action, and, indeed, seems to speak for no other purpose but as it gives her an opportunity of stirring a limb or varying a feature, of glancing her eyes or playing with her fan. . . .

I have often been puzzled to assign a cause why women should have this talent of a ready utterance in so much greater perfection than men.[1] I have sometimes fancied that they have

[1] *Cf.* No. 155 of the *Guardian*, where Addison again emphasises the fact that *copia verborum* is pre-eminently the gift of woman.

not a retentive power or the faculty of suppressing their thoughts, as men have, but that they are necessitated to speak everything they think; and, if so, it would perhaps furnish a very strong argument to the Cartesians for the supporting of their doctrine that the soul always thinks. But as several are of opinion that the fair sex are not altogether strangers to the art of dissembling and concealing their thoughts, I have been forced to relinquish that opinion, and have, therefore, endeavoured to seek after some better reason. In order to it, a friend of mine who is an excellent anatomist has promised me by the first opportunity to dissect a woman's tongue, and to examine whether there may not be in it certain juices which render it so wonderfully voluble or flippant, or whether the fibres of it may not be made up of a finer or more pliant thread, or whether there are not in it some particular muscles which dart it up and down by such sudden glances and vibrations, or whether, in the last place, there may not be certain undiscovered channels running from the head and the heart to this little instrument of loquacity, and conveying into it a perpetual affluence of animal spirits. Nor must I omit the reason which Hudibras has given why those who can talk on trifles speak with greatest fluency—namely,

that the tongue is like a race-horse, which runs the faster the less weight it carries. . . .[1]

I must confess I am so wonderfully charmed with the music of this little instrument that I would by no means discourage it. All that I aim at by this dissertation is to cure it of several disagreeable notes, and in particular those little jarrings and dissonances which arise from anger, censoriousness, gossiping, and coquetry. In short, I would always have it tuned by good nature, truth, discretion, and sincerity[2] (*Addison*).

To the foregoing reflections on the fair sex we add some remarks from No. 433 *by Addison on the mutual influence of the sexes. Allowing for the serio-comic vein in which the whole paper is written, it is not difficult to appreciate the good sense and knowledge of human nature expressed in it.*

The moral world, as consisting of males and females, is of a mixed nature, and filled with several customs, fashions, and ceremonies which would have no place in it were there but one sex.

[1] Part iii., canto 2, verse 443:

"Still his tongue ran on, the less
Of weight it bore, with greater ease."

[2] With this essay by Addison, compare No. 62 by Steele in the *Tatler*, also a mixture of compliment and irony; but the writer is serious when he says: "You see in no place of conversation the perfection of speech so much as in an accomplished woman."

Had our species no females in it, men would be quite different creatures from what they are at present; their endeavours to please the opposite sex polishes and refines them out of those manners which are most natural to them, and often sets them upon modelling themselves, not according to the plans which they approve in their own opinions, but according to those plans which they think are most agreeable to the female world. In a word, man would not only be an unhappy, but a rude, unfinished creature, were he conversant with none but those of his own make.

Women, on the other side, are apt to form themselves in everything with regard to that other half of reasonable creatures with whom they are here blended and confused: their thoughts are ever turned upon appearing amiable to the other sex; they talk, and move, and smile, with a design upon us; every feature of their faces, every part of their dress, is filled with snares and allurements. There would be no such animals as prudes or coquettes in the world were there not such an animal as man. In short, it is the male that gives charms to womankind, that produces an air in their faces, a grace in their motions, a softness in their voices, and a delicacy in their complexions.

As this mutual regard between the two sexes

tends to the improvement of each of them, we may observe that men are apt to degenerate into rough and brutal natures who live as if there were no such things as women in the world as, on the contrary, women who have an indifference or aversion for their counterparts in human nature are generally sour and unamiable, sluttish and censorious (*Addison*).

CHAPTER V

THE "SPECTATOR" ON MARRIAGE

ADDISON *himself did not enter the bonds of matrimony until after the close of the "Spectator's" career in* 1714. *There is, however, ground for believing that before that date he had conceived a tender regard for the Dowager Countess of Warwick, whom eventually, in* 1716, *he married. If we may believe the voice of tradition, his experience of wedded life was not of the happiest. The Countess never forgot the inequality of their respective stations by birth, and, as Dr. Johnson remarks, "their marriage neither found them nor made them equal." But on a subject of such social importance it is not likely that he could be silent.*

Steele's contributions to the subject, on the other hand, are those of a married man, and a man whose affectionate disposition found its satisfaction in domestic life, though it must be confessed that his irregular and extravagant habits were the source of much anxiety and annoyance to the partner of his joys and sorrows. Steele's papers on the subject of matrimony, it may be noted, far outnumber those

of other contributors, and his thoughts may fairly be regarded as a reflection of his own experience. In no part of the joint work, perhaps, is there a more judicious and characteristic mixture of grave and gay than in the papers that deal with this topic.

No. 261.—Those marriages generally abound most with love and constancy that are preceded by a long courtship. The passion should strike root and gather strength before marriage be grafted on it. A long course of hopes and expectations fixes the idea in our minds and habituates us to a fondness of the person beloved.[1]

There is nothing of so great importance to us as the good qualities of one to whom we join ourselves for life; they do not only make our present state agreeable, but often determine our happiness to all eternity. Where the choice is left to friends, the chief point under consideration is an estate; where the parties choose for themselves, their thoughts turn most upon the person. . . .

Before marriage we cannot be too inquisitive and discerning in the faults of the person beloved, nor after it too dim-sighted and superficial. However perfect and accomplished the person appears to you at a distance, you will find many blemishes and imperfections in her humour, upon

[1] Compare No. 192 of the *Tatler*, by Addison.

a more intimate acquaintance, which you never discovered, or perhaps suspected. Here, therefore, discretion and good nature are to show their strength; the first will hinder your thoughts from dwelling on what is disagreeable, the other will raise in you all the tenderness of compassion and humanity, and by degrees soften those very imperfections into beauties.

Marriage enlarges the scene of our happiness and miseries. A marriage of love is pleasant; a marriage of interest easy; and a marriage where both meet happy. A happy marriage has in it all the pleasures of friendship, all the enjoyments of sense and reason, and, indeed, all the sweets of life. Nothing is a greater mark of a degenerate and vicious age than the common ridicule which passes on this state of life. It is, indeed, only happy in those who can look down with scorn or neglect on the impieties of the times, and tread the paths of life together in a constant uniform course of virtue[1] (*Addison*).

No. 479.—*Here Steele begins his remarks on marriage by stating his conviction that in unhappy marriages man is, generally speaking, most to*

[1] It is interesting to learn that Steele in one of his *Tatler* papers (No. 25) illustrates his ideal of family life by his personal acquaintance with the Addisons, whose hospitality he had enjoyed as a boy.

blame. He proceeds: I take it to be a rule to be observed in all occurrences of life, but more especially in the domestic or matrimonial part of it, to preserve always a disposition to be pleased. . . . The man who brings his reason to support his passion, and beholds what he loves as liable to all the calamities of human life both in body and mind, and even at the best what must bring upon him new cares and new relations, such a lover, I say, will form himself accordingly, and adapt his mind to the nature of his circumstances. This latter person will be prepared to be a father, a friend, an advocate, a steward for people yet unborn, and has proper affections for every incident in the marriage state. Such a man can hear the cries of children with pity instead of anger; and when they run over his head, he is not disturbed at their noise, but is glad of their mirth and health. Tom Trusty has told me that he thinks it doubles his attention to the most intricate affair he is about to hear his children, for whom all his cares are applied, make a noise in the next room.[1] On the other side, Will Sparkish cannot put on his periwig or adjust his cravat at the glass for the noise of those damned nurses and squalling brats; and then ends with a gallant

[1] In No. 95 of the *Tatler* Steele has left us a beautiful picture of domestic life.

reflection upon the comforts of matrimony, runs out of their hearing, and drives to the chocolate house.

According as the husband is disposed in himself, every circumstance of his life is to give him torment or pleasure. When the affection is well placed, and supported by the consideration of duty, honour, and friendship, which are in the highest degree engaged in this alliance, there can nothing rise in the common course of life or from the blows or favours of fortune in which a man will not find matters of some delight unknown to a single condition.

He who sincerely loves his wife and family, and studies to improve that affection in himself, conceives pleasure from the most indifferent things; while the married man who has not bid adieu to the fashions and false gallantries of the town is perplexed with everything around him. In both these cases men cannot, indeed, make a sillier figure than in repeating such pleasures and pains to the rest of the world; but I speak of them only as they sit upon those who are involved in them. As I visit all sorts of people I cannot indeed but smile when the good lady tells her husband what extraordinary things the child spoke since he went out. No longer than yesterday I was prevailed with to go home with a fond

husband, and his wife told him that his son, of his own head, when the clock in the parlour struck two, said papa would come home to dinner presently. While the father has him in a rapture in his arms and is drowning him with kisses, the wife tells me he is but just four years old. Then they both struggle for him, and bring him up to me, and repeat his observation of two o'clock. I was called upon, by looks upon the child and then at me, to say something, and I told the father that this remark of the infant of his coming home, and joining the time with it, was a certain indication that he would be a great historian and chronologer. They are neither of them fools, yet received my compliment with great acknowledgment of my prescience. I fared very well at dinner, and heard many other notable sayings of their heir, which would have given very little entertainment to one less turned to reflection than I was; but it was a pleasing speculation to remark on the happiness of a life in which things of no moment give occasion of hope, self-satisfaction, and triumph. On the other hand, I have known an ill-natured coxcomb, who has hardly improved in anything but bulk, for want of this disposition, silence the whole family as a set of silly women and children for recounting things which were really above his own capacity. . . .

I am verily persuaded that whatever is delightful in human life is to be enjoyed in greater perfection in the married than in the single condition. He that has this passion in perfection, in occasions of joy can say to himself, besides his own satisfaction, "How happy will this make my wife and children!" Upon occurrences of distress or danger, can comfort himself, "But all this while my wife and children are safe." There is something in it that doubles satisfaction because others participate them, and dispels afflictions because others are exempt from them. . . . In a word, the married state, with and without the affection suitable to it, is the completest image of heaven and hell we are capable of receiving in this life (*Steele*).

No. 268.—*Here Spectator opens his mind on the frequent failure to obtain happiness in married life. His views are given in a letter from an imaginary correspondent.*

Mr. Spectator,

Your discourse of December 29 on love and marriage[1] is of so useful a kind that I cannot forbear adding my thoughts to yours on that subject. . . . The mischief generally proceeds from the unwise choice people make for

[1] No. 261. See above.

themselves, and an expectation of happiness from things not capable of giving it. Nothing but the good qualities of the person beloved can be a foundation for a love of judgment and discretion, and whoever expects happiness from anything but virtue, wisdom, good-humour, and a similitude of manners, will find themselves widely mistaken. But how few are there who seek after these things, and do not rather make riches their chief, if not their only aim! How rare is it for a man, when he engages himself in the thoughts of marriage, to place his hopes of having in such a woman a constant agreeable companion—one who will divide his cares and double his joys;[1] who will manage that share of his estate he entrusts to her care with prudence and frugality, govern his house with economy and discretion, and be an ornament to himself and family! Where shall we find the man who looks out for one who places her chief happiness in the practice of virtue, and makes her duty her continual pleasure? No; men rather seek for money as the complement of all their desires, and, regardless of what kind of wives they take, they think riches will be a minister to all kind of pleasures, and enable them to keep mistresses, horses, hounds;

[1] So Bacon of friendship, that "works two contrary ways: it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves."

to drink, feast, and game with their companions; pay their debts contracted by former extravagances, or some such vile and unworthy end; and indulge themselves in pleasures which are a shame and scandal to human nature. Now, as for the women, how few of them are there who place the happiness of their marriage in the having a wise and virtuous friend—one who will be faithful and just to all, and constant and loving to them ; who with care and diligence will look after and improve the estate, and without grudging allow whatever is prudent and convenient ! Rather, how few are there who do not place their happiness in outshining others in pomp and show, and that do not think within themselves when they have married such a rich person that none of their acquaintance shall appear so fine in their equipage, so adorned in their persons, or so magnificent in their furniture as themselves ! Thus their heads are filled with vain ideas, and I heartily wish I could say that equipage and show were not the chief good of so many women as I fear it is (*Steele*).

No. 500 *is interesting and valuable both as accentuating one of the blessings of wedded life, and as an emphatic protest against the levity with which the matrimonial bond had long been treated in the world of fashion. Steele's own views are*

expressed, as so frequently, by an imaginary correspondent who signs himself Philogamus.

SIR,

You who are so well acquainted with the story of Socrates must have read how, upon his making a discourse concerning love, he pressed his point with so much success that all the bachelors in his audience took a resolution to marry by the first opportunity, and that all the married men immediately took horse and galloped home to their wives. I am apt to think your discourses, in which you have drawn so many agreeable pictures of marriage, have had a very good effect this way in England. We are obliged to you, at least, for having taken off that senseless ridicule which for many years the witlings of the town have turned upon their fathers and mothers. For my own part, I was born in wedlock, and I do not care who knows it. . . . Nay, Sir, I will go one step further, and declare to you before the whole world that I am a married man, and at the same time I have so much assurance as not to be ashamed of what I have done. . . .

There is another accidental advantage of marriage which has likewise fallen to my share; I mean having a multitude of children. These I cannot but regard as very great blessings. When I see my little troop before me I rejoice

in the additions which I have made to my species, to my country, and to my religion, in having produced such a number of reasonable creatures, citizens, and Christians. I am pleased to see myself thus perpetuated, and as there is no production comparable to that of a human creature, I am more proud of having been the occasion of ten such glorious productions than if I had built a hundred pyramids at my own expense, or published as many volumes of the finest wit and learning. In what a beautiful light has the Holy Scripture represented Abdon, one of the judges of Israel, who had forty sons and thirty grandsons, that rode on threescore and ten ass colts, according to the magnificence of the eastern countries! How must the heart of the old man rejoice when he saw such a beautiful procession of his own descendants, such a numerous cavalcade of his own raising! For my own part I can sit in my parlour with great content when I take a review of half a dozen of my little boys mounting upon hobby-horses, and of as many little girls tutoring their babies, each of them endeavouring to excel the rest, and to do something that may gain my favour and approbation. I cannot question but He who blessed me with so many children will assist my endeavours in providing for them. There is one thing I am

able to give each of them, which is a virtuous education. I think it is Sir Francis Bacon's observation that in a numerous family of children the eldest is often spoiled by the prospect of an estate, and the youngest by being the darling of the parents; but that someone or other in the middle, who has not perhaps been regarded, has made his way in the world, and overtopped the rest. It is my business to implant in every one of my children the same seeds of industry and the same honest principles. By this means I think I have a fair chance that one or other of them may grow considerable in some or other way of life, whether it be in the army or in the fleet, in trade or in any of the three learned professions; for you must know, Sir, that from long experience and observation I am persuaded of what seems a paradox to most of those with whom I converse—namely, that a man who has many children, and gives them a good education, is more likely to raise a family than he who has but one, notwithstanding he leaves him his whole estate. For this reason I cannot forbear amusing myself with finding out a general, an admiral, or an alderman of London, a divine, a physician, or a lawyer among my little people who are now perhaps in petticoats; and when I see the motherly airs of my little daughters when they are

playing with their puppets, I cannot but flatter myself that their husbands and children will be happy in the possession of such wives and mothers.

If you are a father you will not perhaps think this letter impertinent, but if you are a single man you will not know the meaning of it, and probably throw it into the fire. Whatever you determine of it, you may assure yourself that it comes from one who is your most humble servant and well-wisher,

PHILOGAMUS (*Steele*).

No. 437.—*Addison sternly condemns the marriage of convenience, and arraigns* the crowd of mothers, who had rather see their children miserable in great wealth than the happiest of the race of mankind in a less conspicuous state of life.

The other day passed by me in her chariot a lady with that pale and wan complexion which we sometimes see in young people who are fallen into sorrow and private anxiety of mind which antedate age and sickness. It is not three years ago since she was gay, airy, and a little towards libertine in her carriage; but, methought, I easily forgave her that little insolence, which she so severely pays for in her present condition. Flavilla, of whom I am speaking, is married to a sullen fool with wealth. Her beauty and merit

are lost upon the dolt, who is insensible of perfection in anything. Their hours together are either painful or insipid. *The match was brought about by Sempronia, a professional intriguer who makes a handsome competence by contriving such matches at the instance of ambitious mothers.*

The wickedness of Sempronia, one would think, should be superlative; but I cannot but esteem that of some parents equal to it: I mean such as sacrifice the greatest endowments and qualifications to base bargains. A parent who forces a child of a liberal and ingenious spirit into the arms of a clown or a blockhead obliges her to a crime too odious for a name. It is in a degree the unnatural conjunction of rational and brutal beings. Yet what is there so common as the bestowing an accomplished woman with such a disparity? And I could name crowds who live miserable lives for want of knowledge in their parents of this maxim, that good sense and good nature always go together. That which is attributed to fools, and called good nature, is only an inability of observing what is faulty, which turns in marriage into a suspicion of everything as such, from a consciousness of that inability (*Addison*).

No. 482.—*The humorous side of matrimony, it need hardly be said, was not overlooked. Such*

writers as Addison and Steele were bound to get some fun out of the subject, and it is quite in harmony with the general tone of the periodical that, for example, we read of "a rake who had in vain tried to win the affections of a young lady of fifteen, and at last made his fortune by running away with her grandmother."[1]

Addison has a choice piece of satire for one whom he dubs the cot-quean[2]*—i.e., a husband who spends half his time in attending to household matters which belong to the province of his better half. An imaginary correspondent of the fair sex thus writes:*

Mr. Spectator, you have given a lively picture of that kind of husband who comes under the denomination of the hen-pecked; but I do not remember that you have ever touched upon one that is of the quite different character, who in reality is more a woman than I am. He was bred under the tuition of a tender mother till she had made him as good a housewife as herself. He could preserve apricots and make jellies before he had been two years out of the nursery.

[1] No. 305, Budgell.

[2] *Cot-quean*, in its original sense the wife of a labouring man; thence in many senses all of a depreciatory character. One of these is "a man who acts the housewife, that busies himself unduly with matters belonging to the housewife's province." "Go, you cot-queane; go, get you to bed" (*Romeo and Juliet*, IV. iv. 9).—*Oxford Dictionary*.

He was never suffered to go abroad for fear of catching cold; when he should have been hunting down a buck, he was by his mother's side learning how to season it, or put it in crust; and was making paper boats with his sisters at an age when other young gentlemen are crossing the seas or travelling into foreign countries. He has the whitest hand that you ever saw in your life, and raises paste better than any woman in England. These qualifications make him a sad husband. He is perpetually in the kitchen, and has a thousand squabbles with the cook-maid. He is better acquainted with the milk score than his steward's accounts. I fret to death when I hear him find fault with a dish that is not dressed to his liking, and instructing his friends that dine with him in the best pickle for a walnut or sauce for a haunch of venison. With all this he is a very good-natured husband, and never fell out with me in his life, but once upon the over-roasting of a dish of wild fowl. At the same time, I must own I would rather he was a man of rough temper, that would treat me harshly sometimes, than of such an effeminate busy nature in a province that does not belong to him. Since you have given us the character of a wife who wears the breeches, pray say something of a husband that wears the petticoat. Why

should not a female character be as ridiculous in a man as a male character in one of our sex? (*Addison*).

No. 609.—*The story of Tom Nimble's courtship is full of humour.* Then, as for natural antipathies, I know a general officer who was never conquered but by a smothered rabbit,[1] and a wife who domineers over her husband by the help of a breast of mutton. A story that relates to myself on this subject may be thought not unentertaining, especially when I assure you it is literally true. I had long made love to a lady, in the possession of whom I am now the happiest of mankind, whose hand I should have gained with much difficulty without the assistance of a cat. You must know then that my most dangerous rival had so strong an aversion to this species that he infallibly swooned away at the sight of that harmless creature. My friend Mrs. Lucy, her maid, having a greater respect for me and my purse than she had for my rival, always took care to pin the tail of a cat under the gown of her mistress whenever she knew of his coming, which had such an effect that every time he entered the room he looked more like one of the figures in

[1] Smothered—*i.e.*, cooked in a close vessel, especially, it would seem, of rabbits, the only two examples in the *Oxford Dictionary* being of smothered rabbit.

Mrs. Salmon's waxwork[1] than a desirable lover. In short, he grew sick of her company, which the young lady taking notice of (who no more knew why than he did), she sent me a challenge to meet her in Lincoln's Inn Chapel, which I joyfully accepted, and have, amongst other pleasures, the satisfaction of being praised by her for my stratagem.

We may conclude this section with Addison's account of "the demurrer."

In No. 89 *Spectator, with much humour, attacks a type of the fair sex whom he labels as "the demurrer." He informs the public that his correspondents on the subject of love are very numerous, and must be dealt with under several heads. In this essay he will plead the cause of lovers who suffer from the excessive reserve, hesitation, and dilatoriness of woman. Here is a letter from a prosperous member of the legal profession, who has been kept waiting since the twenty-ninth*

[1] Mrs. Salmon's Waxwork Show, a sort of permanent exhibition (like that of Madame Tussaud in later days) held at the sign of the Salmon, near the Horn Tavern, Fleet Street.

Lord Chesterfield, in his skit on the inactivity of the English army (*Fog's Journal*, 1736), suggests that a waxen army be ordered of Mrs. Salmon, the waxwork woman, as securing the advantages of economy, and, at least in time of peace, sufficiency. See *London in Jacobite Times*, vol. ii., p. 68. *Fog's Journal* was a Jacobite publication.

year of King Charles II.'s reign: Notwithstanding he hoped that matters would have been long since brought to an issue, the fair one still demurs. I am so well pleased with this gentleman's phrase that I shall distinguish this sect of women by the title of demurrers. *Thyrsis in another letter informs Spectator that his mistress* "has been demurring these seven years." *Strephon, evidently a somewhat choleric subject,* tells me with great passion that she has bubbled[1] him out of his youth, that she drilled him on to five-and-fifty, and he verily believes she will drop him in his old age if she can find her account in another. *One of the letters is given at length. It bears the signature of Samuel Hopewell.* You know what a dance she has led me. She took me out at the age of two-and-twenty, and dodged with me above thirty years. I have loved her till she is grown as grey as a cat, and am with much ado become the master of her person, such as it is at present. She is, however, in my eye a very charming old woman. We often lament that we did not marry sooner, but she has nobody to blame for it but herself. You know very well that she would never think of me whilst she had a tooth in her head, *etc.*

Spectator then turns to the demurrer, and

[1] "Swindled," *cf. South Sea Bubble.*

endeavours to show the mistake, and indeed the folly, of demurrage on three grounds.

First of all, I would have them seriously think on the shortness of their time. Life is not long enough for a coquette to play all her tricks in. A timorous woman drops into the grave before she has done deliberating. Were the age of man the same that it was before the flood, a lady might sacrifice half a century to a scruple, and be two or three ages in demurring. . . .

In the second place, I would desire my female readers to consider, that as the term of life is short, that of beauty is much shorter. The finest skin wrinkles in a few years, etc.

There is a third consideration, which I would likewise recommend to a demurrer, and that is the great danger of her falling in love when she is about three score, if she cannot satisfy her doubts and scruples before that time. There is a kind of latter spring that sometimes gets into the blood of an old woman, and turns her into a very odd sort of animal. . . .

I would not, however, be understood by anything I have here said to discourage that natural modesty in the sex which renders a retreat from the first approaches of a lover both fashionable and graceful. All that I intend is to advise them, when they are prompted by reason and inclination,

to demur only out of form, and so far as decency requires. A virtuous woman should reject the first offer of marriage as a good man does that of a bishopric; but I would advise neither the one nor the other to persist in refusing what they secretly approve (*Addison*).

In an age, as we have seen, of great moral laxity the "Spectator" consistently and fearlessly upheld the sacredness of the marriage tie. From its contributors, whether Addison, Steele, Hughes, or Budgell, the "latitudinarian in wedlock" (to borrow a phrase from the "Spectator") received no mercy. The loose man and the woman of the town were placed on the same level,[1] *and although the drama long continued to be coarse and impure, their labours were not in vain.*[2]

[1] See No. 486.

[2] That the writers of the *Spectator* had reason to be satisfied that their views on marriage had a beneficial effect upon society is clear from No. 525 by Hughes.

Reference to the refining and purifying influence of Addison's literary work are very frequent, and a large collection of such testimonies might be made. Take, for example, the following lines from a very eminent but by no means friendly hand:

"In all Charles's days,
Roscommon only boasts unspotted bays;
And in our own (excuse some courtly stains)
No whiter page than Addison's remains.
He from the taste obscene reclaims our youth,
And sets the passions on the side of truth;
Forms the soft bosom with the gentlest art,
And pours each human virtue in the heart."

ALEXANDER POPE: *Imitations of Horace.*

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CHAPTER VI

THE "SPECTATOR" ON THE ODDITIES OF LIFE

SOME of the most entertaining, if less directly edifying, pages of the "Spectator" deal with the absurdities and oddities of the world that he was watching

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William Somerville, in *An Address to Addison*, says:

> "When panting Virtue her last efforts made,
> You brought your Clio to the virgin's aid"

—a couplet greatly admired by Dr. Johnson.

The following stanza forms part of an impromptu by the Rev. William Clarke:

> "There sportively Prior
> Sweeps o'er the whole lyre
> With fingers and fancy divine;
> While Addison's Muse
> Does each virtue infuse;
> Clear, chaste, and correct in each line."
>
> NICHOLS: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iv., p. 377.

Nichols, in his *Literary Illustrations*, has preserved a skit entitled *Addison's Ghost*, signed "An Old Westminster," and containing a striking tribute to the moral influence of Addison (vol. iii., p. 768).

For the poet Gay's opinion of the *Tatler's* influence in rescuing the subject of matrimony from ridicule, as well generally refining and sobering the thought of the day, see a *Letter on the Present State of Wit*, quoted by Nathan Drake in his *Essays*, vol. iii., p. 383. At p. 385 there is a further tribute to the wholesome influence of his writings, printed immediately after his death.

and criticising. Spectator, as we have already seen, enjoyed a laugh and meant the world to share his enjoyment. I have read, *says Addison*, a sermon of a conventual in the Church of Rome on those words of the wise man, "I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What does it?"[1] Upon which he laid it down as a point of doctrine that laughter was the effect of original sin, and that Adam could not laugh before the fall. *Those who read the essay on laughter and ridicule in which these words occur* (*No.* 249) *know well that the writer did not agree with the conventual whom he quotes. He has nothing but what is good to say of laughter. On the other hand of personal ridicule he finds nothing too bad to say.* The talent of turning men into ridicule and exposing to laughter those one converses with is the qualification of little ungenerous tempers. A young man with this cast of mind cuts himself off from all manner of improvement. Everyone has his flaws and weaknesses—nay, the greatest blemishes are often found in the most shining characters; but what an absurd thing is it to pass over all the valuable parts of a man, and to fix our attention on his infirmities; to observe his imperfections more than his virtues; and to make use of him

[1] Eccles. ii. 2.

for the sport of others, rather than for our own improvement! . . .

If the talent of ridicule were employed to laugh men out of vice and folly, it might be of some use to the world; but, instead of this, we find that it is generally made use of to laugh men out of virtue and good sense, by attacking everything that is solemn and serious, decent and praiseworthy in human life (*Addison*).

At things ridiculous Spectator felt himself perfectly free to laugh. Let us note some of the absurdities he draws attention to.

No. 538.—*In this essay Addison has something to say about antipathies and exaggerations.* Surprise is so much the life of all stories that everyone aims at it who endeavours to please by telling them. *But there is such a thing as false surprise, which is awakened by extreme improbability on the one hand, or by exaggeration on the other. Spectator has been led to this observation by a company in which he happened to find himself.* The subject of antipathies was a proper field wherein such false surprisers might expatiate, and there were those present who appeared very fond to show it in its full extent of traditional history. Some of them in a learned manner offered to our consideration the miraculous powers which the effluviums of cheese have over bodies whose

pores are disposed to receive them in a noxious manner; others gave an account of such who could indeed bear the sight of cheese, but not the taste, for which they brought a reason from the milk of their nurses. Others again discoursed, without endeavouring at reasons, concerning an unconquerable aversion which some stomachs have against a joint of meat when it is whole, and the eager inclination they have for it when, by its being cut up, the shape which had affected them is altered. From hence they passed to eels, then to parsnips, and so from one aversion to another, until we had worked up ourselves to such a pitch of complaisance that when the dinner was to come in we enquired the name of every dish, and hoped it would be no offence to any of the company, before it was admitted. When we had sat down, this civility among us turned the discourse from eatables to other sorts of aversions; and the eternal cat, which plagues every conversation of this nature, began then to engross the subject. One had sweated at the sight of it, another had smelled it out as it lay concealed in a very distant cupboard; and he who crowned the whole set of these stories reckoned up the number of times in which it had occasioned him to swoon away. "At last," says he, "that you may all be satisfied of my invincible

aversion to a cat, I shall give an unanswerable instance. As I was going through a street of London, where I had never been until then, I felt a general damp and faintness all over me, which I could not tell how to account for until I chanced to cast my eyes upwards, and found that I was passing under a signpost on which the picture of a cat was hung."

The extravagance of this turn in the way of surprise gave a stop to the talk we had been carrying on. Some were silent because they doubted, and others because they were conquered in their own way; so that the gentleman had opportunity to press the belief of it upon us, and let us see that he was rather exposing himself than ridiculing others.

I must freely own that I did not all this while disbelieve everything that was said; but yet I thought some in the company had been endeavouring who should pitch the bar farthest; that it had been for some time a measuring cast, and at last my friend of the cat and signpost had thrown beyond them all. . . . From hence, thought I, there are two ways which the well-bred world generally takes to correct such a practice, when they do not think fit to contradict it flatly.

The first of these is a general silence, which I

would not advise anyone to interpret in his own behalf . . . indeed (if we should even go no farther) silence, or a negligent indifference, has a deeper way of wounding than opposition. . . .

The other method which the world has taken for correcting this practice of false surprise is to overshoot such talkers in their own bow, or to raise the story with further degrees of impossibility, and set up for a voucher to them in such a manner as must let them see they stand detected. Thus I have heard a discourse was once managed upon the effects of fear. One of the company had given an account how it had turned his friend's hair grey in a night while the terrors of a shipwreck encompassed him. Another, taking the hint from thence, began upon his own knowledge to enlarge his instances of the like nature to such a number that it was not probable he could ever have met with them; and as he still grounded those upon different causes for the sake of variety, it might seem at last, from his share of the conversation, almost impossible that anyone who can feel the passion of fear should all his life escape so common an effect of it. By this time some of the company grew negligent, or desirous to contradict him; but one rebuked the rest with an appearance of severity, and, with the known old story in his head, assured them that

they need not scruple to believe that the fear of anything can make a man's hair grey, since he knew one whose periwig had suffered so by it. Thus he stopped the talk, and made them easy. Thus is the same method taken to bring us to shame which we fondly take to increase our character (*Addison*).

No. 576.—*In this essay on singularity Spectator lays it down as a principle that "singularity is only vicious when it makes men act contrary to reason, or when it puts them upon distinguishing themselves by trifles." On the other hand, "singularity is laudable when, in contradiction to a multitude, it adheres to the dictates of conscience, morality, and honour."* I remember a young man of very lively parts and of a sprightly turn in conversation who had only one fault, which was an inordinate desire of appearing fashionable. This ran him into many amours, and consequently into many distempers. He never went to bed till two o'clock in the morning because he would not be a queer fellow, and was every now and then knocked down by a constable to signalise his vivacity. He was initiated into half a dozen clubs before he was one-and-twenty, and so improved in them his natural gaiety of temper that you might frequently trace him to his lodgings by a range of broken windows, and

other the like monuments of wit and gallantry. To be short, after having fully established his reputation of being a very agreeable rake, he died of old age at five-and-twenty. . . .

I have heard of a gentleman in the North of England who was a remarkable instance of this foolish singularity. He had laid it down as a rule within himself to act in the most indifferent parts of life according to the most abstracted notions of reason and good sense, without any regard to fashion or example. This humour broke out at first in many little oddnesses: he had never any stated hours for his dinner, supper, or sleep, because, said he, we ought to attend the calls of nature, and not to set our appetites to our meals, but bring our meals to our appetites. In his conversation with country gentlemen he would not make use of a phrase that was not strictly true: he never told any of them that he was his humble servant, but that he was his well-wisher, and would rather be thought a malcontent than drink the king's health when he was not dry. He would thrust his head out of his chamber window every morning, and after having gaped for fresh air about half an hour, repeat fifty verses as loud as he could bawl them for the benefit of his lungs, to which end he generally took them out of Homer, the Greek tongue, especially in

that author, being more deep and sonorous, and more conducive to expectoration than any other. He had many other particularities, for which he gave sound and philosophical reasons. As this humour still grew upon him, he chose to wear a turban instead of a periwig, concluding very justly that a bandage of clean linen about his head was much more wholesome, as well as cleanly, than a caul of a wig, which is soiled with frequent perspirations. He afterwards judiciously observed that the many ligatures in our English dress must naturally check the circulation of the blood, for which reason he made his breeches and his doublet of one continued piece of cloth, after the manner of the hussars. In short, by following the pure dictates of reason, he at length departed so much from the rest of his countrymen, and indeed from his whole species, that his friends would have clapped him into Bedlam and have begged his estate; but the judge, being informed that he did no harm, contented himself with issuing out a commission of lunacy against him, and putting his estate into the hands of proper guardians.

No. 77 presents us with an amusing caricature of the absent-minded man from the pen of Budgell. My friend Will Honeycomb is one of those sort of men who are very often absent in conversation,

and what the French call *à rêveur* and *à distrait.* A little before our club-time last night we were walking together in Somerset Garden, where Will had picked up a small pebble of so odd a make that he said he would present it to a friend of his, an eminent virtuoso. After we had walked some time, I made a full stop with my face towards the west, which Will knowing to be my usual method of asking what's o'clock in an afternoon, immediately pulled out his watch and told me we had seven minutes good. We took a turn or two more, when to my great surprise I saw him squir away his watch a considerable way into the Thames, and with great sedateness in his looks put up the pebble he had before found in his fob. As I have naturally an aversion to much speaking, and do not love to be the messenger of ill news, especially when it comes too late to be useful, I left him to be convinced of his mistake in due time, and continued my walk, reflecting on these little absences and distractions in mankind, and resolving to make them the subject of a future speculation. . . .

Monsieur Bruyère has given us the character of an absent man with a great deal of humour, which he has pushed to an agreeable extravagance; with the heads of it I shall conclude my present paper.

Menalcas (says that excellent author) comes down in a morning, opens his door to go out, but shuts it again, because he perceives that he has his nightcap on, and, examining himself further, finds that he is but half shaved, that he has stuck his sword on his right side, that his stockings are about his heels, and that his shirt is over his breeches. When he is dressed he goes to court, comes into the drawing-room, and walking bolt upright under a branch of candlesticks, his wig is caught up by one of them, and hangs dangling in the air. All the courtiers fall a-laughing, but Menalcas louder than any of them, and looks about for the person that is the jest of the company. Coming down to the court gate he finds a coach, which, taking for his own, he whips into it, and the coachman drives off, not doubting but he carries his master. As soon as he stops, Menalcas throws himself out of the coach, crosses the court, ascends the staircase, and runs through all the chambers with the greatest familiarity, reposes himself on a couch, and fancies himself at home. The master of the house at last comes in. Menalcas rises to receive him, and desires him to sit down; he talks, muses, and then talks again. The gentleman of the house is tired and amazed; Menalcas is no less so, but is every moment in hopes that his imper-

tinent guest will at last end his tedious visit. Night comes on, when Menalcas is hardly undeceived.

When he is playing backgammon he calls for a full glass of wine and water; it is his turn to throw; he has the box in one hand and his glass in the other, and, being extremely dry and unwilling to lose time, he swallows down both the dice and at the same time throws his wine into the tables. He writes a letter, and flings the sand into the ink-bottle; he writes a second, and mistakes the superscription. A nobleman receives one of them, and upon opening it reads as follows: "I would have you, honest Jack, immediately upon the receipt of this, take in hay enough to serve me the winter." His farmer receives the other, and is amazed to see in it, "My lord, I received your grace's commands, with an entire submission to . . ." If he is at an entertainment, you may see the pieces of bread continually multiplying round his plate. It is true the rest of the company want it, as well as their knives and forks, which Menalcas does not let them keep long. Sometimes in a morning he puts his whole family in a hurry, and at last goes out without being able to stay for his coach or dinner; and for that day you may see him in every part of the town, except the very place

where he had appointed to be upon a business of importance. You would often take him for everything that he is not: for a fellow quite stupid, for he hears nothing; for a fool, for he talks to himself, and has a hundred grimaces and motions with his head, which are altogether involuntary; for a proud man, for he looks full upon you, and takes no notice of your saluting him. The truth of it is, his eyes are open, but he makes no use of them, and neither sees you, nor any man, nor anything else. He came once from his country-house, and his own footmen undertook to rob him, and succeeded. They held a flambeau to his throat, and bid him deliver his purse; he did so, and, coming home, told his friends he had been robbed; they desired to know the particulars. "Ask my servants," says Menalcas, "for they were with me" (*Budgell*).

No. 612 *contains a good-natured caricature of, perhaps, not a few persons with whom the writer was personally acquainted—men who, having nothing better to boast of, nursed their pride upon their pedigree.*

It is highly laudable to pay respect to men who are descended from worthy ancestors, not only out of gratitude to those who have done good to mankind, but as it is an encouragement to others to follow their example. But this is

an honour to be received, not demanded, by the descendants of great-men, and they who are apt to remind us of their ancestors only put us upon making comparisons to their own disadvantage. There is some pretence for boasting of wit, beauty, strength, or wealth, because the communication of them may give pleasure or profit to others; but we can have no merit, nor ought we to claim any respect, because our fathers acted well, whether we would or no. The following letter ridicules the folly I have mentioned in a new and, I think, not disagreeable light:

Mr. Spectator,—Were the genealogy of every family preserved, there would probably be no man valued or despised on account of his birth. There is scarce a beggar in the streets who would not find himself lineally descended from some great man, nor any one of the highest title who would not discover several base and indigent persons among his ancestors. It would be a pleasant entertainment to see one pedigree of men appear together under the same characters they bore when they acted their respective parts among the living. Suppose, therefore, a gentleman, full of his illustrious family, should, in the same manner as Virgil makes Æneas look over his descendants, see the whole line of his progenitors

pass in review before his eyes. With how many varying passions would he behold shepherds and soldiers, statesmen and artificers, princes and beggars, walk in the procession of five thousand years! How would his heart sink or flutter at the several sports of fortune in a scene so diversified with rags and purple, handicraft tools and sceptres, ensigns of dignity and emblems of disgrace! And how would his fears and apprehensions, his transports and mortifications, succeed one another as the line of his genealogy appeared bright or obscure!

In most of the pedigrees hung up in old mansion-houses you are sure to find the first in the catalogue a great statesman, or a soldier with an honourable commission. The honest artificer that begot him, and all his frugal ancestors before him, are torn off from the top of the register, and you are not left to imagine that the noble founder of the family ever had a father. Were we to trace many boasted lines farther backwards, we should lose them in a mob of tradesmen or a crowd of rustics, without hope of seeing them emerge again: not unlike the old Appian Way, which, after having run many miles in length, loses itself in a bog.

I lately made a visit to an old country gentleman who is very far gone in this sort of family

madness. I found him in his study perusing an old register of his family, which he had just then discovered, as it was branched out in the form of a tree upon a skin of parchment. Having the honour to have some of his blood in my veins, he permitted me to cast my eye over the boughs of this venerable plant, and asked my advice in the re-forming of some of the superfluous branches.

We passed slightly over three or four of our immediate forefathers, whom we knew by tradition, but were soon stopped by an alderman of London, who I perceived made my kinsman's heart go pit-a-pat. His confusion increased when he found the alderman's father to be a grazier, but he recovered his fright upon seeing justice of the quorum at the end of his titles. Things went on pretty well as we threw our eyes occasionally over the tree, when unfortunately he perceived a merchant taylor perched on a bough, who was said greatly to have increased the estate; he was just going to cut him off if he had not seen *gent.* after the name of his son, who was recorded to have mortgaged one of the manors his honest father had purchased. A weaver who was burnt for his religion in the reign of Queen Mary was pruned away without mercy, as was likewise a yeoman who died of a fall from his

own cart. But great was our triumph in one of the blood who was beheaded for high treason, which nevertheless was not a little allayed by another of our ancestors who was hanged for stealing of sheep. The expectations of my good cousin were wonderfully raised by a match into the family of a knight, but, unfortunately for us, this branch proved barren; on the other hand, Margery, the milkmaid, being twined round a bough, it flourished out into so many shoots, and bent with so much fruit, that the old gentleman was quite out of countenance. To comfort me under this disgrace, he singled out a branch ten times more fruitful than the other, which he told me he valued more than any in the tree, and bade me be of good comfort. This enormous bough was a graft out of a Welsh heiress, with so many Aps upon it that it might have made a little grove by itself. From the trunk of the pedigree, which was chiefly composed of labourers and shepherds, arose a huge sprout of farmers; this was branched out into yeomen, and ended in a sheriff of the county, who was knighted for his good service to the crown in bringing up an address. Several of the names that seemed to disparage the family, being looked upon as mistakes, were lopped off as rotten or withered; as, on the contrary, no small number appearing

without any titles, my cousin, to supply the defects of the manuscript, added *esq.* at the end of each of them.

This tree, so pruned, dressed, and cultivated, was within a few days transplanted into a large sheet of vellum, and placed in the great hall, where it attracts the veneration of his tenants every Sunday morning while they wait till his worship is ready to go to church, wondering that a man who had so many fathers before him should not be made a knight, or at least a justice of the peace.[1]

No. 371.—*How little did the notorious Duke of Buckingham of the Cabal*[2] *think that his follies and puerilities would be recorded within thirty years of his own death by one of the foremost writers of the day in a journal read by tens of thousands of his countrymen, and would thus take their place in the literature of England! Since the Duke was to find a place in the pages of the "Spectator," it might have been for something better and wiser than for a few silly, not to say ungentlemanly, practical jokes. They are recorded in a letter from an*

[1] No. 612 is not guaranteed by Tickell as being one of Addison's essays, but it bears every mark of being his composition.

[2] The only editor of the *Spectator* who throws doubt on this identification with the Duke of Buckingham is Mr. Gregory Smith, who says, "perhaps Buckingham, author of the *Rehearsal*."

imaginary (?) correspondent, of which the following is the most notable part:

Sir,—You know very well that our nation is more famous for that sort of men who are called whims and humorists than any other country in the world. *He proceeds to deal with certain practical jokes played by the Duke of Buckingham.*[1]

One of the wits of the last age, who was a man of good estate, thought he never laid out his money better than in a jest. As he was one year at the Bath, observing that in the great confluence of fine people there were several among them with long chins, a part of the visage by which he himself was very much distinguished, he invited to dinner half a score of these remarkable persons,

[1] There is another and much less derogatory reference to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (died 1687) in No. 509, in which his connection with the English manufacture of glass is highly spoken of. He is "the late witty and inventive Duke of Buckingham," to whom the kingdom is "beholden for the whole trade and manufacture of glass." This enterprise was introduced in 1670 by Venetian artists, under the patronage of the Duke. The manufactory was situated at Vauxhall, in the parish of Lambeth, and the business was carried on with financial success for more than a century. John Evelyn records a visit to the factory on September 19, 1676: "We also saw the Duke of Buckingham's glasse-works, where they made huge vases of mettal as cleare, ponderous and thick as crystal; also looking-glasses far larger and better than any that come from Venice." And see a notice of this manufactory in the *History of Lambeth*, 1786, p. 120.

who had their mouths in the middle of their faces. They had no sooner placed themselves about the table but they began to stare upon one another, not being able to imagine what brought them together. Our English proverb says:

> " 'Tis merry in the hall
> When beards wag all."
> 2 *Henry IV.*, Act V., scene iii., line 35.

It proved so in the assembly I am now speaking of, who, seeing so many freaks of faces agitated with eating, drinking, and discourse, and observing all the chins that were present meeting together very often over the centre of the table, every-one grew sensible of the jest, and came into it with so much good humour that they lived in strict friendship and alliance from that day forward.

The same gentleman some time after packed together a set of oglers, as he called them, consisting of such as had an unlucky cast in their eyes. His diversion on this occasion was to see the cross-bows, mistaken signs, and wrong connivances,[1] that passed amid so many broken and refracted rays of sight.

The third feast which this merry gentleman

[1] Connivances. Addison seems to mean by the term in this place assentings, polite acquiescences made at the wrong time or to the wrong person.

exhibited was to the stammerers, whom he got together in a sufficient body to fill his table. He had ordered one of his servants, who was placed behind a screen, to write down their table-talk, which was very easy to be done without the help of shorthand. It appears by the notes which were taken that, though their conversation never fell, there were not above twenty words spoken during the first course; that upon serving up the second, one of the company was a quarter of an hour telling them that the ducklings and asparagus[1] were very good; and that another took up the same time in declaring himself of the same opinion. This jest did not, however, go off so well as the former, for one of the guests, being a brave man, and fuller of resentment than he knew how to express, went out of the room, and sent the facetious inviter a challenge in writing, which, though it was afterwards dropped by the interposition of friends, put a stop to these ludicrous entertainments.[2]

The writer goes on to say that an acquaintance

[1] In first reprint *sparrow-grass*.

[2] The Duke of Buckingham's predilection for practical jokes is alluded to by Pope in his imaginative and exaggerated description of his death:

> "No wit to flatter, left of all his store,
> No fool to laugh at, which he valued more."
>
> *Moral Essay on the Use of Riches.*

of his improved upon the Duke's method by introducing an element of edification into his jokes. He invited half a dozen of his friends one day to dinner, who were each of them famous for inserting several redundant phrases in their discourse, as "D'ye hear me?" "D'ye see?" "That is," "And so, Sir." Each of the guests, making frequent use of his particular elegance, appeared so ridiculous to his neighbour that he could not but reflect upon himself as appearing equally ridiculous to the rest of the company. By this means, before they had sat long together, everyone talking with the greatest circumspection, and carefully avoiding his favourite expletive, the conversation was cleared of its redundancies, and had a greater quantity of sense, though less sound in it.

The same well-meaning gentleman took occasion at another time to bring together such of his friends as were addicted to a foolish habitual custom of swearing. In order to show them the absurdity of the practice, he had recourse to the invention above mentioned, having placed an amanuensis in a private part of the room. After the second bottle, when men open their minds without reserve, my honest friend began to take notice of the many sonorous but unnecessary words that had passed in his house since their

sitting down at table, and how much good conversation they had lost by giving way to such superfluous phrases. "What a tax," says he, "would they have raised for the poor, had we put the laws in execution upon one another!"[1] Every one of them took this gentle reproof in good part, upon which he told them that, knowing their conversation would have no secrets in it, he had ordered it to be taken down in writing, and for the humour sake would read it to them if they pleased. There were ten sheets of it, which might have been reduced to two had there not been those abominable interpolations I have before mentioned. Upon the reading of it in cold blood, it looked rather like a conference of fiends than of men. In short, everyone trembled at himself upon hearing calmly what he had

[1] The reference appears to be to the blasphemy laws. The Act against profane swearing, with its fines of five shillings, two shillings, one shilling, according to the rank of the offender, was not passed until 19 George II. There is no doubt that in this part of the paper Addison was drawing attention to one of the most discreditable features of his time. Language in fashionable society at that period was exceptionally bad, and the women were almost as bad as the men. See Sydenham, *England in the Eighteenth Century*. No. 137 of the *Tatler* contains a forcible and realistic protest against swearing, "an old army friend" being trotted out as a shocking example. Swift's curious piece, *The Swearer's Bank*, indicates the scandalous prevalence of profane language in the time of the *Spectator*.

pronounced amidst the heat and inadvertency of discourse (*Addison*).

It is clear from No. 251 *that to persons of sensitive temperament London cries were as distasteful two hundred years ago as they are to-day. Ralph Crotchet writes to the "Spectator" on this subject, severely criticising the present practice, and suggesting that he should be appointed Comptroller-General of London Cries. The letter is interesting, not only as throwing light upon daily life in the reign of Queen Anne, but also because, in reading it, we find in the street cries under notice a link with our own experience. From the description given of the various cries we confidently infer that as, e.g., in the case of the milkman, the sweep, and the chairs-to-mend-man, we are listening to-day to the same sounds that fell upon the ears of our ancestors.*

There is nothing which more astonishes a foreigner and frights a country squire than the cries of London. My good friend Sir Roger often declares that he cannot get them out of his head, or go to sleep for them, the first week that he is in town. On the contrary, Will Honeycomb calls them the *ramage de la ville*, and prefers them to the sounds of larks and nightingales, with all the music of the fields and woods. I have lately received a letter from some very odd fellow upon

this subject, which I shall leave with my reader without saying anything further of it.

SIR,—I am a man out of all business, and would willingly turn my head to anything for an honest livelihood. I have invented several projects for raising many millions of money without burdening the subject, but I cannot get the Parliament to listen to me, who look upon me, forsooth, as a crack and a projector; so that, despairing to enrich either myself or my country by this public-spiritedness, I would make some proposals to you relating to a design which I have very much at heart, and which may procure me a handsome subsistence, if you will be pleased to recommend it to the cities of London and Westminster.

The post I would aim at is to be Comptroller-General of the London Cries, which are at present under no manner of rules or discipline. I think I am pretty well qualified for this place, as being a man of very strong lungs, of great insight into all the branches of our British trades and manufactures, and of a competent skill in music.

The cries of London may be divided into vocal and instrumental. As for the latter, they are at present under a very great disorder. A freeman of London has the privilege of disturbing a whole street for an hour together with the twankling of a brass kettle or a frying-pan. The

watchman's thump at midnight startles us in our beds as much as the breaking-in of a thief. The sow-gelder's horn has, indeed, something musical in it, but this is seldom heard within the liberties. I would therefore propose that no instrument of this nature should be made use of which I have not tuned and licensed, after having carefully examined in what manner it may affect the ears of Her Majesty's liege subjects.

Vocal cries are of a much larger extent, and indeed so full of incongruities and barbarisms, that we appear a distracted city to foreigners, who do not comprehend the meaning of such enormous outcries. Milk is generally sold in a note above E-la, and in sounds so exceedingly shrill that it often sets our teeth on edge.[1] The chimney-sweeper is confined to no certain pitch; he sometimes utters himself in the deepest bass, and sometimes in the sharpest treble; sometimes in the highest, and sometimes in the lowest note of the gamut. The same observation might be made on the retailers of small coal, not to mention broken glasses or brick-dust. In these, therefore, and the like cases, it should be my care to sweeten and

[1] The evolution, in this case resulting in much abbreviation, of the milkman's cry is thus given by Mr. Charles Hindley: "'The old cry was 'Any milk here?' It then passed into 'Milk-maids below,' which was shortened into 'Milk below,' corrupted finally into 'Mio.'" (*Cries of London*, p. 139.)

mellow the voices of these itinerant tradesmen before they make their appearance in our streets, as also to accommodate their cries to their respective wares, and to take care in particular that those may not make the most noise who have the least to sell, which is very observable in the vendors of card-matches,[1] to whom I cannot but apply that old proverb of "Much cry, but little wool."

Some of these last-mentioned musicians are so very loud in the sale of these trifling manufactures that an honest splenetic gentleman of my acquaintance bargained with one of them never to come into the street where he lived. But what was the effect of this contract? Why, the whole tribe of card-matchmakers which frequent that quarter passed by his door the very next day, in hopes of being bought off after the same manner. . . .

It might likewise deserve our most serious consideration how far, in a well-regulated city, those humorists are to be tolerated who, not contented with the traditional cries of their forefathers, have invented particular songs and tunes of their own, such as was not many years since—the pastry-man, commonly known by the

[1] Card-match, a piece of card dipped in melted sulphur, used in combination with flints and steel.

name of the Colly-Molly-Puff,[1] and such as is at this day the vendor of powder and wash-balls,[2] who, if I am rightly informed, goes under the name of Powder-Watt.

I must not here omit one particular absurdity which runs through this whole vociferous generation, and which renders their cries very often not only incommodious, but altogether useless to the public. I mean that idle accomplishment, which all of them aim at, of crying so as not to be understood. Whether or no they have learned this from several of our affected singers I will not

[1] Colly-Molly-Puff, mentioned again in No. 362: "Ever since the decease of Colly-Molly-Puff of agreeable but noisy memory." "This little man was but just able to support the basket of pastry which he carried on his head, and sang in a very peculiar tone the cant words which passed into his name, Colly-Molly-Puff." See Tegg's Edition of *Spectator*, 1853.

[2] Wash-ball, "a ball of soap, sometimes combined with cosmetics" (*Century Dictionary*). "We furnish'd ourselves with wash-balls, the best being made here" (*Evelyn's Diary*, May 21, 1645). This was at Bologna, still famous for its soap. A rare woodcut in the British Museum has preserved for us the "cry" of the wash-ball vendor, which was as follows:

> "Buy fine washing balls, buy a ball,
> Cheaper and dearer, greater and small;
> For scouring none to them excel,
> Their odour scenteth passing well;
> Come, buy rare balls, and trial make,
> Spots out of clothes they quickly take."
>
> HINDLEY: *Cries of London*, p. 58.

take upon me to say, but most certain it is that people know the wares they deal in rather by their tunes than by their words; insomuch that I have sometimes seen a country boy run out to buy apples of a bellows-mender, and gingerbread from a grinder of knives and scissors. Nay, so strangely infatuated are some very eminent artists of this particular grace in a cry that none but their acquaintance are able to guess at their profession; for who else can know that "work if I had it" should be the signification of a corn-cutter? (*Addison*).

In No. 167 *Steele admonishes his readers against the foolish habit of castle-building in the following letter from Vitruvius:*

Mr. Spectator,—I am a fellow of a very odd frame of mind, as you will find by the sequel, and think myself fool enough to deserve a place in your paper. I am unhappily far gone in building, and am one of that species of men who are properly denominated castle-builders, who scorn to be beholden to the earth for a foundation, or dig in the bowels of it for materials, but erect their structure in the most unstable of elements, the air, fancy alone laying the line, marking the extent, and shaping the model. It would be difficult to enumerate what august palaces and stately porticoes have grown under my forming

imagination, or what verdant meadows and shady groves have started into being by the powerful feat of a warm fancy. A castle-builder is even just what he pleases, and as such I have grasped imaginary sceptres and delivered uncontrollable edicts from a throne to which conquered nations yielded obeisance. I have made I know not how many inroads into France, and ravaged the very heart of that kingdom; I have dined in the Louvre and drank champagne at Versailles, and I would have you take notice I am not only able to vanquish a people already "cowed" and accustomed to flight, but I could, Almanzor-like,[1] drive the British general from the field, were I less a Protestant, or had ever been affronted by the confederates. There is no art or profession whose most celebrated masters I have not eclipsed. Wherever I have afforded my salutary presence, fevers have ceased to burn and agues to shake the human fabric. When an eloquent fit has been upon me, an apt gesture and proper cadence has animated each sentence, and gazing crowds have found their passions worked up into rage or soothed into calm. I am short and not very well made, yet upon sight of a fine woman I have stretched into proper stature, and killed with a

[1] Almanzor, a violent character in Dryden's *Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards*.

good air and mien. These are the gay phantoms that dance before my waking eyes, and compose my day-dreams. I should be the most contented happy man alive, were the chimerical happiness which springs from the paintings of fancy less fleeting and transitory. But, alas! it is with grief of mind I tell you, the least breath of wind has often demolished my magnificent edifices, swept away my groves, and left no more trace of them than if they had never been. My exchequer has sunk and vanished by a rap on my door, the salutation of a friend has cost me a whole continent, and in the same moment I have been pulled by the sleeve my crown has fallen from my head (*Steele*).

No. 577.—*The enthusiastic reciter goes to stay with a friend in the country, and communicates his experience in a letter to the "Spectator."* Now, you must know, Mr. Spectator, that when I read, especially if it be poetry, it is very usual with me, when I meet with any passage or expression which strikes me much, to pronounce it aloud with that tone of the voice which I think agreeable to the sentiments there expressed, and to this I generally add some motion or action of the body. It was not long before I was observed by some of the family in one of these heroic fits, who thereupon received im-

pressions very much to my disadvantage. This, however, I did not soon discover, nor should have done probably, had it not been for the following accident: I had one day shut myself up in my chamber, and was very deeply engaged in the second book of Milton's *Paradise Lost.* I walked to and fro with the book in my hand, and, to speak the truth, I fear I made no little noise, when, presently coming to the following lines:

> "On a sudden open fly,
> With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
> Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
> Harsh thunder," etc.,

I in great transport threw open the door of my chamber, and found the greatest part of the family standing on the outside in very great consternation. I was in no less confusion, and begged pardon for having disturbed them, addressing myself particularly to comfort one of the children, who received an unlucky fall in this action while he was too intently surveying my meditations through the keyhole. To be short, after this adventure I easily observed that great part of the family, especially the women and children, looked upon me with some apprehensions of fear; and my friend himself, though he still continues his civilities to me, did not seem altogether easy. I took notice that the butler was never after this

accident ordered to leave the bottle on the table after dinner. Add to this, that I frequently overheard the servants mention me by the name of "the crazed gentleman, the gentleman a little touched, the mad Londoner, and the like."

No. 148.—*Among the company that Spectator meets with at the coffee-house, few are more objectionable than, on the one hand, the loud talker, and, on the other, the whisperer.* There are another kind of impertinents which a man is perplexed with in mixed company, and those are your loud speakers. These treat mankind as if we were all deaf; they do not express, but declare themselves. Many of these are guilty of this outrage out of vanity, because they think all they say is well, or that they have their own persons in such veneration that they believe nothing which concerns them can be insignificant to anybody else. For these people's sake, I have often lamented that we cannot close our ears with as much ease as we can our eyes. It is very uneasy that we must necessarily be under persecution. Next to these bawlers is a troublesome creature who comes with the air of your friend and your intimate, and that is your whisperer. There is one of them at a coffee-house which I myself frequent, who, observing me to be a man pretty well made for secrets, gets by me, and with a

whisper tells me things which all the town knows. It is no very hard matter to guess at the source of this impertinence, which is nothing else but a method or mechanic art of being wise. You never see any frequent in it whom you can suppose to have anything in the world to do. These persons are worse than bawlers, as much as a secret enemy is more dangerous than a declared one. I wish this my coffee-house friend would take this for an intimation that I have not heard one word he has told me for these several years; whereas he now thinks me the most trusty repository of his secrets. The whisperers have a pleasant way of ending the close conversation with saying aloud, "Do not you think so?" Then whisper again, and then aloud, "But you know that person," then whisper again. The thing would be well enough if they whispered to keep the folly of what they say among friends, but, alas! they do it to preserve the importance of their thoughts. . . . A great help to their discourse is "That the town says, and people begin to talk very freely, and they had it from persons too considerable to be named, what they will tell you when things are riper." My friend has winked upon me every day since I came to town last, and has communicated to me as a secret that he designed in a very short time

to tell me a secret, but I shall know what he means, he now assures me, in less than a fortnight's time (*Steele*).

In No. 245 *T. B. communicates with Spectator on the subject of love-tokens.*

Sir,—Among the several ways of consolation which absent lovers make use of while their souls are in that state of departure which you say is death in love, there are some very material ones that have escaped your notice. Among these, the first and most received is a crooked shilling, which has administered great comfort to our forefathers, and is still made use of on this occasion with very good effect in most parts of Her Majesty's dominions. There are some I know who think a crown piece cut into two equal parts, and preserved by the distant lovers, is of more sovereign virtue than the former. But since opinions are divided in this particular, why may not the same persons make use of both? The figure of a heart, whether cut in stone or cast in metal, whether bleeding upon an altar, stuck with darts, or held in the hand of a Cupid, has always been looked upon as talismanic in distresses of this nature. I am acquainted with many a brave fellow who carries his mistress in the lid of his snuff-box, and by that expedient has supported himself under the absence of a

whole campaign. For my own part, I have tried all these remedies, but never found so much benefit from any as from a ring in which my mistress's hair is plaited together very artificially in a kind of true lover's knot. As I have received great benefit from this secret, I think myself obliged to communicate it to the public for the good of my fellow-subjects. I desire you will add this letter as an appendix to your consolations upon absence, and am your very humble servant, T. B. (*Addison*).

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